A COLLABORATION MODEL THAT ENHANCES THE SOCIAL EQUITY OF SOCIALLY AND ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED INDIVIDUALS AT URBAN EMPOWERMENT MINISTRIES

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ABSTRACT

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Social inequities create disparities that lead to poverty and other community concerns. In order to reverse negative effects upon disadvantaged individuals, churches, community-based organizations (CBOs) and corporations can work together to decrease poverty and improve communities. The hypothesis of this project suggests that prophetic leadership may increase individual awareness and foster community collaboration to enhance the social equity of members in Urban Empowerment Ministries. The project's methodology included workshops to educate and share resources, and networking sessions to bridge relational gaps between the church, CBOs and corporations in order to encourage partnerships that may address social inequities.

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INTRODUCTION

As the author began the Doctor Ministry program at United Theological Seminary, it was truly his desire to capture some of the workforce development experiences in his professional career, as well as his pastoral call of empowering people, and transpose those experiences into enhancing "social equity" issues in the church and the community. This perspective involved addressing social justice concerns, such as inequities within the society, and establishing a strategy to close the economic and social gaps within communities. The hope and desire for this project is that it would establish a strategy or a model that community leaders, professionals, executives and especially pastors could use to foster a better quality of life for those who are the least, the lost and the left behind.

As a consequence, the project theme is "A Collaboration Model that Enhances the Social Equity of Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Individuals at Urban Empowerment Ministries." The purpose of this qualitative narrative research project is to determine if prophetic leadership may provide spiritual empowerment to individuals through awareness and foster collaboration between the church, community-based organizations (CBOs) and corporations to enhance the social equity of members at Urban Empowerment Ministries resulting in a better quality of life. The methodology executed allowed the evaluation of the spiritual, educational and socio-economic status of the members of Urban Empowerment Ministries. The author's leadership, along with the

context associates, allowed us to mentor individuals to provide spiritual encouragement and empowerment through workshops and life/social skills sessions. Additionally, informational sharing and networking meetings were held to bridge the gap between the church, CBOs and corporations in order to foster partnerships to address social and economic inequities within our context.

According to H. George Frederickson in his book *Social Equity and Public Administration: Origins, Developments, and Applications,* social equity through the lens of public administration "has emerged as a shorthand way of referring to the concerns and opinions of those who are challenging contemporary theory and practice."[1] Based upon experiences, his words "contemporary theory and practice" are understood to be relegated to what has been traditional or systematic practices. Many of these systemic practices, whether intentionally or unintentionally, have left disadvantaged individuals out of circles and opportunities that might have positively impacted their lives, especially people of color. These systemic practices have left these communities with marginal education, lack of access to gainful employment, high poverty rates and chronic health concerns.

These are all major concerns that are being addressed in many ways; however, this project intends to provide actionable steps for churches, communities, corporations and government to implement in order to address systemic discrimination and advance economic development in socio-economic disadvantaged communities. Frederickson continues to note that,

> We live in a world of large and very complex organizations where the application of such concepts is difficult. This is also a world in which organizations tend to

[1] H. George Frederickson, *Social Equity and Public Administration: Origins, Developments, and Applicat*ions (New York, NY: Routledge, 2015), 41.

> elevate their own needs over individual needs and goals. The problem is one of making complex organizations responsible to the needs of the individual. This requires rising above the rules and routines of organization to some concern for the self-respect and dignity of the individual citizen.[2]

In order to change this perspective and ideology, the church has to take the lead in preparing its parishioners for opportunities and work with CBOs and corporations to increase their concern for the whole community, including those who have been traditionally left in the margins.

Therefore, "social equity" for this project is leveling the playing field for fairness in access to economic and social opportunities to improve one's ability to strive for a better quality of life. The enhancement of one's "social equity" is not singularly economic or financial, because it is the combination of social and financial equity that lends itself to improve the whole person. In the author's perspective, fair access to "social equity" results in authentic relationships, necessary resources and increased revenue. In order to enhance the social equity within disadvantaged communities, it is important to see the world through the biblical lens of everyone having "all things common," as referenced in Acts chapter two verse forty-four. The early church perspective of unity, togetherness, sharing, and equity ensured that all individuals in this community had everything they needed, both naturally and spiritually, which is highlighted further in the biblical foundations chapter (two).

Furthermore, in order to address these concerns, the historical foundations chapter (three) reveal Walter Rauschenbusch's "Social Gospel," which challenged the social structures of his time, and raised awareness of the need for social change. Rauschenbusch's "Social Gospel" connects perfectly with the theological thought of

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[2] Frederickson, *Social Equity and Public Administration*, 45.

liberation theology (chapter four). Consequently, highlighted in the theological foundations chapter is one of the most foremost thinkers and liberation theologians, Gustavo Gutierrez, who is also known as the father of liberation theology.[3] Once systemic and social inequities have been identified, there has to be a positive alternative to liberate individuals impacted by negative systemic discriminatory practices. Asset-based community development in the Interdisciplinary Foundations chapter (five), evaluates individual and community assets that can help change the trajectory of individual lives and a community.

The final project analysis (chapter six) will be through triangulation evaluation of the "social equity" gained by the participants through an analysis of pre and post-surveys. This review will include 1) an assessment the awareness gained by participants based upon the information gained during the workshops and life/social skill sessions and the information shared during the supportive services sessions; 2) an evaluation of the change or progress of the wholistic economic/financial impact of the participants surveyed from the beginning of the project to the conclusion; and 3) an anecdotal analysis of the value added to the participants by the relationships formed during the project. The intent is to critique if the participants gained greater awareness of opportunities and resources, as well as increased employment, and if these opportunities advanced the financial equity of the participants.

The project's target audience includes individuals between the ages of eighteen through forty-five within Urban Empowerment Ministries; however, the reader will see in the Project Analysis chapter, there are several individuals who participated in the project

[3] Gustavo Gutierrez and Gerhard Ludwig Müller, *On the Side of the Poor: The Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015), viii.

who are over the age of forty-five. All participants were African American men and women, except for one Caucasian woman. Furthermore, all of the participants meet the United States Department of Transportation's definition of being socially and economically disadvantaged, which; "presumes certain groups are disadvantaged, including women, Black Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, Asian-Pacific Americans, Subcontinent Asian-Pacific Americans, or other minorities found to be disadvantaged by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)."[4]

Additionally, we will consider participants who fall below the poverty line, according to the United States Department of Health and Human Services.[5] We incorporated these definitions because of familiarity in working with these classification standards in the transportation industry. Since all of the participants met one or both definitions, we selected all of the individuals, who signed-up for the project, to participate. Although twenty-two individuals signed-up, the project launched with eighteen participants who completed the pre-survey, and sixteen completed the post-survey. A more detailed review of the context demographics will be discussed in the Ministry Focus chapter.

The final project analysis reveals a triangulation of success gained in the "social equity" of the participants as a whole. First, the participants reveal an increase of awareness of their purpose, vision and commitment to fulfill the dreams granted to them by God. Additionally, the participants gained resources, information and education based

[4] "Eligibility Guidelines (Overview)," Transportation.gov, accessed December 26, 2019, https://www.transportation.gov/civil-rights/disadvantaged-business-enterprise/eligibility.

[5] "HHS Poverty Guidelines for 2019," ASPE.hhs.gov, accessed December 26, 2019, https://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty-guidelines.

upon the productivity of the workshops, life/social skills and supportive services shared during the training sessions. Secondly, the participants revealed a 4% increase in the financial equity or revenue, based upon an evaluation of the pre and post-survey analysis of their annual incomes. Finally, the individual participants were benefactors of one of the greatest aspects of "social equity," the relationships gained with the partners, as well as between themselves, which could produce dividends for the remainder of their lives, if fostered.

Based upon the comparison of the participant's responses between the pre and post-surveys, which reveal an enhancement of their "social equity," the project appears to have been a success. Additionally, the project concluded with an 88.9% participant completion rate. This high level of participation reveals the enthusiasm the participants had for the project. The CBOs and corporation partners were very excited about the project, as well. Therefore, it appears that this type of project can benefit individuals, the church and the community at-large, to enhance the social equity of disadvantaged persons.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

As founder and Senior Pastor of Urban Empowerment Ministries, I lead a group of individuals called to reach the unchurched "urban mindset" in a non-traditional, unconventional and relevant presentation of the Word of God, with the ultimate mission to "Empower People to Impact a Community." Additionally, as the External Civil Rights Director for the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT), I am responsible to ensure economic advancement for minorities and women in the highway and transportation industry. These positions provide me the opportunity to serve the church, the community, and the state, as well as fulfill my personal mission, which is to bridge relational gaps by bringing people together, moving people toward their purpose and creating opportunities, as highlighted in my contextual analysis of Urban Empowerment Ministries, paper.

There are societal gaps, economic gaps, educational gaps, as well as a variety of resource gaps in the community of my context. I believe that through inspiration, motivation, and revelation, people's lives can be empowered to the point of encouragement, resulting in a positive impact upon their personal vision, purpose and destiny. However, the context does not only provide the opportunity of ministry for me, it provides an opportunity of ministry for many to be empowered, operate in their gifts and utilize their talents for the glory of God and to be a blessing to His people.

Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to bring together my spiritual journey in ministry and my professional journey in the marketplace in order to provide a platform for collaboration with Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and corporations to enhance the social equity of individuals at Urban Empowerment Ministries, which would in turn promote a better quality of life.

As I reflected upon my personal experiences, as well as my educational and vocational assignments, it appears that God has strategically placed me within a context to live out my vision, purpose and destiny. From the time of my silent protest, based upon my decision as an African American male not to play basketball in a predominantly white high school to becoming the civil rights director for a state transportation agency have all contributed to my interest in social justice and social equity concerns. Coupled with the calling to establish a local church ministry focused on the mental, spiritual, political and economic plight of the socially and economically disadvantaged communities, I am poised to address social equity issues and determine strategies to improve the quality of life of individuals and their families, who have been affected by educational gaps, low self-esteem, lack of opportunities and or marginalized by society.

My project context, Urban Empowerment Ministries, is strategically poised to fulfill its vision to “Empower People to Impact a Community.” Additionally, the context includes the right target audience for my personal mission and doctoral dissertation. My prayer is that through my research and this Doctor of Ministry project I develop a resolution to the social equity issues that will chip away at the disparities in our society, while at the same time, bring healing to the impoverished in our community. As a consequence, my proposed Doctor of Ministry project is surrounding the thought of how

churches, communities and corporations may work together to address social justice concerns in education, employment and entrepreneurship. As identified in my contextual analysis of Urban Empowerment Ministries, I propose that through prophetic leadership it is possible for church leaders to outreach in the communities in which they serve and prepare individuals spiritually, socially and mentally, while at the same time work together with corporations and organizations, as well as government, to connect these individuals to employment opportunities. The church has an opportunity to be a source of support for corporations and government in order to assist with recruitment, retention and stability for individuals employed or supported by the entities. As a consequence, if churches, corporations, organizations and government intentionally collaborate and work together, it is possible to address social equity concerns amongst the socially and economically disadvantaged, and help these individuals flourish to a better quality of life.

Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to connect my personal assignment, as well as my professional abilities, with my pastoral and social responsibilities. Jesus spoke a parable to his disciples in Matthew the twenty-fifth chapter, verses thirty-five through forty (New Revised Standard Version), which exclaimed:

> For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'[6]

[6] Biblical citations within this document are from the New Revised Standard Version unless stated otherwise.

I suggest that we all have a responsibility to attend to the needs of those who may be considered "the least." As a consequence, I hope the results of this project will reveal the type of communal collaboration needed to bring a positive change to the individuals in the communities in which we matriculate, serve and support.

Context

On Sunday, January 1, 2006, Urban Empowerment Ministries was officially launched in Columbia, Missouri, as a ministry to lead people to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, foster spiritual growth and provide an opportunity for believers to fulfill their divine calling by serving God and His people. As previously mentioned, the specific assignment of the new church start was to reach the unchurched "urban mindset" in a non-traditional, unconventional way, with a relevant presentation of the Word of God. Additionally, based upon the targeted audience that the parishioners were called to reach, who were predominantly underprivileged and disadvantaged individuals, "Empowering People to Impact a Community," became the mission of the church and these individuals. It was our belief that through salvation in Jesus Christ, one's spiritual life would be impacted, resulting in the complete change in the trajectory of one's natural life, educationally, physically, politically and financially.

During the initial development of Urban Empowerment Ministries in 2005, Columbia's total population was 84,531, which included 49,397 people between the ages of fifteen to forty-five, according to the 2005 census data.[7] We estimated that 70% of this age group was unchurched. Through strategic planning sessions, members of the church

[7] Lester Woods Jr., "Urban Empowerment: Empowering People to Impact a Community" (presentation, Urban Empowerment Ministries, Columbia, August 2005).

established an impact goal of reaching 1% of the un-churched urban mindset in the community, which was approximately 350-500 people. As a result of the church being strong in evangelism and outreach, community service and leadership development, it had a measure of success in connecting with its targeted audience. The church holds community Bible studies, community block parties and Vacation Bible School in various areas of the community and beyond the four walls of our church. Additionally, we also feed the homeless on every fifth Saturday throughout the year; during the school year, we have a "Spirit Check" with our college students in order to provide them encouragement and support while they matriculate throughout the stressful semester. The church holds a Ministry Development Institute each year from January through June, where we train and prepare our deacons, ministers, elders and pastors to serve in the ministry for the remainder of the year. As a result of strong leadership, the church has been very active in addressing youth violence and leading community prayer walks to rid our streets of gang activity and gun violence.

In addition to the church's evangelistic activities and community outreach, the church holds weekly Sunday morning Worship Services at 10:00 a.m. and weekly Wednesday evening Bible studies at 7:00 p.m. New member classes are held an hour before each Sunday morning Worship service and Wednesday evening Bible study. Each of these services are sources of spiritual impartation and empowerment for all who attend. Additionally, the church is a multi-sensory ministry, which includes music, creative arts and a dynamic presentation of a relevant Word during our Sunday services. I have mentioned to the church on a number of occasions that we operate on a mega-ministry level with a shoe-string budget. All of these activities are performed with

volunteers and no full-time staff; however, all of the staff who volunteer in the church produce full-time work. These initiatives require us to utilize every inch of our 10,000 square foot facility; however, our current facility does not adequately accommodate the church's needs for multiple classrooms and meeting rooms to enhance our teaching and continued planning. Other weaknesses that we face which hinder our ability to reach and retain our targeted audience, as well as perpetuate continual growth, is parking and sanctuary space. As a consequence, this is one of the reasons for the need to address "social equity" in our community. Based upon the individuals that we are called to serve, if the church can minister to the spiritual needs of our targeted audience, work with Community-Based Organizations to strengthen their life skills and encourage them to aspire for increased education, then they can become gainfully employed. As a result of the change in the trajectory of one's life, the hope is that the individuals will return and become mentors and supporters of other individuals within the church and become a greater financial contributor to the church, as well. As a result of increased financial contributions to the church, the church can improve its resources, tools and facilities in order to provide greater accommodations for enhancing the spiritual, emotional and educational wherewithal of other individuals that we serve.

The city of Columbia is an excellent place to gain a great education, it provides awesome employment opportunities and it is a great environment to raise a family. However, if people are not empowered spiritually and emotionally, nor equipped mentally and educationally, they will be left behind. Therefore, I suggest that bringing pastors, community leaders and employers together, in order to expand opportunities, should create a change within the socio-economic disadvantaged populations of the

community. Moreover, I pray that through my prophetic leadership, a spiritual revolution may spring forth and lead people to a place of inspiration and encouragement that will change the trajectory of our community spiritually, educationally and socially.

In speaking of meeting the community's needs, it is important to mention that the city of Columbia is predominantly a college town. The city includes several colleges and universities, such as the main campus of the University of Missouri-Columbia, Columbia College, Stephens College, Moberly Area Community College, and Bryant University, as well as trade schools and technical schools. Additionally, Lincoln University, which is a Historically Black College and University, is located thirty miles away in Jefferson City, Missouri, the state capitol. Columbia has a great public-school system, as well, which includes several high schools and an alternative high school. These great educational opportunities, as with many other college towns, people from all over the United States, as well as the world, attend these schools in order to advance their view of the world, increase their wisdom and knowledge, and establish a good quality of life through the career of their choice. Due to multiple educational and employment opportunities within the city, many people who come to the city for higher education, find employment in business, management or government, when they graduate, and then make Columbia their home.

Urban Empowerment Ministries is located in the Second Ward of Columbia which is one of six wards that comprise of the city's developing boundaries and geographical limits. Additionally, the city is positioned between St. Louis and Kansas City which are two major metropolitan centers located along Interstate 70 which connects major causeways of economic viability within the state. The U.S. Census Bureau shows

steady growth in Columbia's population which has risen from 108,500 to 120,612 residents between the years of 2010 and 2016.[8] Additionally, a 2011 report from the Ward Redistricting Committee signify that the Second Ward experienced the greatest growth in the city between 2000 and 2010, revealing an increase from a total of 13,608 to 21,324 residents.[9]

According to the 2013, U.S. Census American Community Survey five-year Block Groups Data, the median average household income of those living within the Second Ward is an average of $44,732.40.[10] Additionally, the average household income of families within the Second Ward is consistent with the average median household income of Columbia.[11] The U.S. Census Bureau reported that the average household income in Columbia is $44,907.[12] In comparison to the other Wards, the area ranks within a mid-trajectory of economic status that can be found in the growing city.[13] The average income of the First Ward residents falls to an extreme of only $18,837.87 per household when stacked against the Fourth Ward residents who average a total of

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[8] "U.S. Census Bureau," Quick Facts, accessed October 31, 2017, https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/MO,columbiacitymissouri/PST045216.

[9] City of Columbia, "City Council 2011 Ward Restricting Committee Report Case 11-77," accessed November 6, 2017, https://www.como.gov/Council/Commissions/downloadfile.php?id=2009.

[10] City of Columba GSI Office, "2015 U.S. Census American Community Survey Five-year Block Groups Data," accessed November 6, 2017, http://www.como.gov/Maps/documents/Ward_Socio_Economic.pdf.

[11] City of Columba GSI Office, "2015 U.S. Census American Community Survey Five-year Block Groups Data," accessed November 6, 2017, http://www.como.gov/Maps/documents/Ward_Socio_Economic.pdf.

[12] "U.S. Census Bureau," Quick Facts, accessed October 31, 2017, https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/MO,columbiacitymissouri/PST045216.

[13] City of Columba GSI Office, "2015 U.S. Census American Community Survey Five-year Block Groups Data," accessed November 6, 2017, http://www.como.gov/Maps/documents/Ward_Socio_Economic.pdf.

$84,375.36 per household.[14] Although the church has been referred to as being on the "outskirts" of Columbia, it attracts a diverse socio-economic population from multiple Wards within the city, thus making up a varying degree of economic status found within its membership.

I have an opportunity to pastor a diverse socio-economic population, which is both a fulfilling opportunity and rewarding challenge as direct demographic factors impact the initial level and access to resources found within the local congregation. This is also reflected in the racial make-up of the church's population and demographic reach. Additionally, the U.S. Census Bureau reports that of the 45,204 households that make-up the city's total 2010 population count included 76% (85,742) of residents identifying as white (Caucasian) and only 10% (12,217) of residents identified as black (African-American).[15] According to the U.S. Census Bureau 93.8% of Columbia residents has obtained a high school diploma and 55.5% of the total city population has completed at least a bachelor's degree for post-secondary education development.

In an attempt to understand the church's current demographics, in November 2017, a large number of the church's attendees took a Church Demographics Survey. The survey determined that the congregation is predominantly made up of African Americans; between the ages of twenty to forty years old. The survey revealed that most of the attendees have never been married, thirty-five percent are currently married and twenty percent fall under the category of divorced, widowed or separated. According to

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[14] City of Columba GSI Office, "2015 U.S. Census American Community Survey Five-year Block Groups Data," accessed November 6, 2017, http://www.como.gov/Maps/documents/Ward_Socio_Economic.pdf.

[15] "U.S. Census Bureau," Quick Facts, Missouri, accessed October 31, 2017, https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/MO,columbiacitymissouri/PST045216.

the church's database, the majority of the church's one hundred and eighty-one members attend weekly church services. Urban Empowerment is a non-denominational ministry; however, the founding beliefs coincide with the Baptist doctrine and the Full Gospel Baptist Distinctives. This seems to resonate with the attendees, because seventy-four percent list Baptist as the primary denomination of their youth, and the remaining twenty-six percent list other denominations, such as Church of God in Christ, Disciples of Christ, Lutheran, Methodist, and Presbyterian.

As previously mentioned, individuals who move to Columbia and make Columbia their home, consider education as one of the significant purposes for this retention. As a consequence, the survey revealed that the majority of those who attend Urban Empowerment Ministries are focused on pursuing a higher level of education; therefore, based upon our style of service, we reach a large number of African American college students. The survey results also indicate that fifty-six percent of attendees have obtained college degrees; thirty-three percent received undergraduate degrees, while the other twenty-three percent earned graduate degrees; and the remaining forty-four percent of attendees obtained some form of high school degree such as a high school diploma or GED; out of this group only thirty-five percent have pursued some level of college education but have not obtained a degree yet. Nevertheless, whether these individuals make Columbia their home or not, as a result of increased educational opportunities and employment, the church takes advantage of this excellent opportunity to foster spiritual growth for the short but imperative season in the lives of these believers and plant seeds that will empower and enrich them beyond their educational career.

Although the Church Demographics Survey revealed that a large number of attendees are college students, there are a significant number of individuals who remained in the community after receiving their degrees and move on to become a part of the working class. The survey reveals a working class of attendees predominantly specializing in the fields of human service, health care, business management, administration and other professions. These professions provide a stable source of income for most, whereas seventy-three percent make $50,000 a year or less annually, but twenty-seven percent earn more than $50,000 a year, annually. The survey denotes that most have a stable income, but renting outweighs home ownership; therefore, only twenty percent are homeowners, while eighty percent rent or live with a family member or friend.

These and other dynamics disproportionately affect the socio-economic disadvantaged community, which includes the unchurched "urban mindset" that my ministry context, Urban Empowerment Ministries, is designed to reach. While the church is prepared to share the Word of God and provide spiritual empowerment for the soul of the individual, it is my proposal that through collaboration with other community programs and corporations, the spiritually engaged individual will be more apt to be successful in furthering their education and maintaining gainful employment. Holistic success is essential for establishing a better quality of life for these individuals and changing the trajectory of their family's lives, as well. This is still the solution to equity, equality and opportunity, today. The system of education is a network of training one's character and one's competence. It is spiritual and natural. One without the other will not work, alone. They both must be joined at the hip in unity and one accord for the

individual to be successful. As a result of the survey, the age of the participants for the project will be between eighteen through forty-five; however, as mentioned, several of the participants are beyond the age of forty-five. Consequently, closing the economic disparity within this age group, between minority and non-minority community, may ultimately result in better neighborhoods, communities and churches.

Ministry Journey

As I prepared my spiritual autobiography, I began to notice God in numerous areas of my life. It was like all the individual pieces of the puzzle of my life fell into place and formed Lester Woods, who is called by God to carry the Word of God, minister to the needs of His people and ensure “social change” within my sphere of influence. The question of “Who is Lester Woods?” that I struggled with for years really begin to be answered. In my spiritual autobiography, I reflected upon the time when I was attending the predominantly white Calvin High School and my shop teacher, who was a Caucasian male, jovially commented to the other Caucasian boys, in the class that "You're acting like a Nigger!" I guess the teacher forgot that I was sitting on the other side of the class. I remembered the apology that the teacher tried to give to me, because he did not realize that I was present. I recall not knowing how to feel about the whole situation, but I did know that he was not talking to me! I also realized in later years this same individual became the school's principal and ultimately, the superintendent of the school board. If that was not enough, it came to my attention that this individual was a minister in his local church and became the pastor, as well. This experience, as well as the silent protest from my decision not to play basketball at this predominantly white high school,

subconsciously, initiated my interest in addressing racism. I did not realize it then, but now I know a social justice and civil rights advocate was in the making.

After graduating from high school and being the only African American male in my high school class, I attended Grambling State University, a Historically Black College and University (HBCU), which was located approximately thirty-five to forty minutes from my home. In retrospect, in attending Grambling, I wanted to know who I was a young black man, so by attending an HBCU, I intended to become ingrained in African-American issues, in order to gain a greater understanding of how to serve and to become an educated leader in the African-American community. Upon graduation from Grambling, I attended the University of Missouri-Columbia for graduate school, which was a predominately white university. I went from living in an all-black community and attending a predominately black elementary school through my freshman year in high school. Then, I graduated from a predominantly white high school and went to a historically black university for college and, afterwards, back to a predominantly white university for graduate school. I had the best of both worlds. I learned how to maneuver back-and-forth and be accepted and respected in both worlds, if you will. I learned to speak both languages and how to build bridges between the two. As a consequence, I identified my calling, my purpose and my assignment. The question of "Who is Lester Woods?" began to be answered and my ministry journey began to be defined. Each of these experiences equipped me for who I am today. I'm a unifier. I'm a bridge builder. I'm a "change-agent."

My ministry journey included a time in my childhood when I stuttered so bad that I could hardly hold a one-on-one conversation with anyone, much less speak to a crowd.

When I graduated college at Grambling and moved to Columbia for graduate school, I was motivated to launch my own singing group, called Soul Winners for Christ Chorale. My heart and passion were to reach the lost at any cost and utilize my gifts and talents to do it, which ultimately included preaching. Can you image maturing from a place where you could barely have a one-on-one conversation with people individually to standing in front of a room filled with people and having to speak. I started introducing songs with exhortation and like "preaching" in between the songs we sang. I moved from just playing music and learning songs, and started getting into the Word of God, because I felt God calling me to "Preach" the Gospel. One day while at my work study job, I went to lunch and took my Bible with me. I felt a special spiritual affinity toward, Luke 4:18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord." I was reading these verses over and over and over, and at lunch, I asked God to lead to what he wanted me to read for that day, and when I opened my Bible, it turned to Isaiah 61:1-3:

> The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion—to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory.

I am no Bible scholar, and I do not even believe I had read that Old Testament passage before, but since it is where Jesus read from as written in the Gospel of Luke, I knew it was confirmation. This experience was a revelation, and I knew that God had called me

to “preach the Gospel to the poor,” and in June 1996, I preached my first sermon. As a consequence, I knew God had a greater purpose for my life. These experiences increased my faith in God, as well as my confidence, and catapulted me from just being a musician, to being a leader, a minister and a man of the cloth. I had been transformed, because it could only be God who had lifted the string of my tongue and given me the supernatural ability to speak His Word and minister to the needs of His people by addressing socio-economic inequalities.

After I graduated from graduate school at the University of Missouri-Columbia, and moving further into my professional journey as a civil rights director for (MoDOT), it became my responsibility to lead the department's external affirmative action, equal employment and non-discrimination programs. In 2005, the state highway agency that I work for was embarking upon a $500 Million highway renovation in the St. Louis community, which would provide for a better transportation system in that community, as well as create opportunities of employment for minorities that could change the trajectory of their lives. My role in regard to this project was to establish project goals for minorities and women to receive employment opportunities; however, many years before I led this division, the community developed mistrust issues with the agency. Therefore, we needed to establish a successful plan to provide these opportunities and re-establish trust with the community. Our team met with every faith-based organization, community organization, corporation, government and educational entity that we considered stakeholders to the project. We held “Community Round Table Discussions” to build relationships with these entities and connect the dots of training and employment. The result of the dialogue between these entities, allowed us to establish partnering

agreements and measures to ensure that the work force reflected the population of the communities in which the project was being built. We set aside a training budget to prepare individuals for the work and we provided a partial wage reimbursement to the contractors who hired these individuals to help build the project. As a consequence, this initiative became known as the "Missouri Model," which was highlighted as a national best-practice and was shared with various transportation agencies across the country.

As I continue my ministry journey, these attributes and the anointing that God has placed on my life has led me to not only be a spiritual leader, but a social justice seeker. As we take a look into today's societal issues, we readily identify discrimination, racial profiling, gun violence, police brutality and social injustice, just to name a few. Most of these social ills negatively affect more individuals in socially and economically disadvantaged communities at a higher rate than individuals in more affluent communities. Therefore, I believe that my current journey in ministry and the marketplace has prepared me to take on the assignment to establish a method of collaboration between the church, the community and corporations that may close the socio-economic gaps and injustices in our society.

Over the past few years, we have seen the deaths of Trayvon Martin in Sanford, Florida, Eric Garner in Staten Island, New York City, Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, Tamir Rice in Cleveland, Ohio, Freddie Gray in Baltimore, Maryland, and Laquan McDonald, as well as several others. The way state and local policies, rules and laws are established, the legal systems in many cases do not appear to provide justice for individuals and their families who are negatively affected in these situations. In each of these situations, despite the circumstances, we predominately hear the voices of concern

from clergy in the minority communities; however, this is an hour in America where the church has an opportunity to show its strength and power by unifying to ensure that justice is served fairly for each individual in our communities, despite their race, gender or socio-economic status. Each of these issues are very difficult to address and many of them are highly controversial to engage. These issues are polarizing and political, but the church has to take a side and that side should not be a democratic or republican side. It should not be a denominational side. It should be the side of fairness, equality and justice.

When I decided to enter a Doctor of Ministry program and began to look at the United Theological Seminary, I ran across the Gardner C. Taylor Scholars: Prophetic Leadership-Social Justice and Political Action Focus Group. I knew this would be my area of interest. Every occurrence previously highlighted, as well as others that have not been mentioned, have been promoted by God and have prepared me for this moment. Our society is saturated with racism, bigotry, and hatred. Racial tensions are on the rise and it does not appear that these issues are going away anytime soon. Racial profiling, gun violence and police brutality has separated our country socially, economically and politically. If my assignment and appointment by God is to bring people together, create opportunities and move people toward their purpose, then the time is now. As mentioned in my contextual analysis paper, my prayer is that through this Doctor of Ministry project, I develop a resolution to a problem that will chip away at the disparities in our society, while at the same time, bring healing to the lowest, the least and the left behind.

The general question that I have is: How can churches, communities and corporations work together to decrease the poverty and increase the quality of life for socially and economically disadvantaged individuals and communities? I propose that it

is possible for churches through prophetic leadership to outreach into the communities in which they serve to prepare individuals spiritually, socially and mentally, for employment with corporations and organizations within their communities. As a consequence, if these entities intentionally collaborate and work together, it is possible to address social equity issues among socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, and help those individuals establish a better quality of life.

In order to prepare these entities to work together toward the common good for these individuals and for the community, I believe transformative learning will need to be incorporated for the leaders of those entities to understand the necessity of this initiative, as highlighted in my *Transformative Learning in Practice* Book Review.[16] Therefore, I truly see "collaborative inquiry" as a transformative learning approach to be utilized in this project, as highlighted in *Transformative Learning in Practice: Insights from Community, Workplace and Higher Education*, by Jack Mezirow and Edward W. Taylor, in chapter 22 "Collaborate Inquiry in Action."[17] As Mezirow and Taylor highlight collaborative inquiry engages discourse, feeling and critical reflectivity to initiate social change within an individual's perspectives and assumptions. In juxtaposition to collaboration inquiry, Mezirow and Taylor highlight "critical reflection" as another essential element of transformative learning.[18] It is another element that may be utilized in my project, as identified in chapter eleven, "Engaging Critical Reflection in Corporate

[16] Lester Woods Jr., "Transformative Learning in Practice" (book review presented to United Theological Seminary, Dayton, September 15, 2017).

[17] Jack Mezirow and Edward W. Taylor, *Transformative Learning in Practice: Insights from Community, Workplace and Higher Education* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2010), 251.

[18] Mezirow and Taylor, *Transformative Learning in Practice*, 7.

America."[19] Mezirow and Taylor argue that, "adult learning occurs in four ways—elaborating existing frames of reference, learning frames of references, transforming points of view, and transforming habits of mind—and names critical reflection as a component of all of these."[20] I consider each of these approaches essential to bringing community leaders and employers together in order to unlearn myths and build new paradigms that expand opportunities and create social change within specific areas of the community.

I expect to learn what elements of the collaboration between churches, CBO and corporations work best, and what elements may be improved upon. Additionally, I hope to identify the type of mentorship and encouragement needed to provide the spiritual support necessary to motivate and empower individuals. It would, also, be helpful to understand the types of trainings and services available through local Community-Based Organizations. I also hope to understand what corporations would consider to be the "basic expectations" from employees in order for them to be successful and increase retention. Finally, it would be helpful to identify what elements and benchmarks individuals consider as important indicators for a changed quality of life.

[19] Mezirow and Taylor, *Transformative Learning in Practice*, 125.

[20] Mezirow and Taylor, *Transformative Learning in Practice*, 125.

CHAPTER TWO

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

As previously mentioned, we have seen the deaths of Trayvon Martin in Sanford, Florida, Eric Garner in Staten Island, New York City, Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, Tamir Rice in Cleveland, Ohio, Freddie Gray in Baltimore, Maryland, and Laquan McDonald, as well as several others. In each of these situations, despite the circumstances, we predominately hear the voices of concern from clergy in the minority communities; however, this is an hour in America where the church has an opportunity to show its strength and power by unifying to ensure that justice is served fairly for each individual in our communities, despite their race, gender or socio-economic status.

Our society is saturated with racism, bigotry, and hatred. Racial tensions are on the rise and it does not appear that these issues are going away anytime soon. Racial profiling, gun violence and police brutality has separated our country socially, economically and politically. If the assignment and appointment by God is to bring people together, create opportunities and move people toward their purpose, then the time is now.

Prayerfully, through this Doctor of Ministry project, a resolution will be developed to a problem that will chip away at the disparities in our society, while at the same time, bring healing to the lowest, the least and the left behind. As a consequence, the intent of the proposed Doctor of Ministry project is to reveal how collaboration

between churches, communities and corporations may address social justice concerns, such as in education, employment and entrepreneurship and as a consequence, close the "Social Equity" gap within the socio-economically disadvantaged communities.

There is an evident disparity in relationship to everything connected to people who are socially and economically disadvantaged, such as schools, neighborhoods, and churches. People who are educated and affluent, have better neighborhoods, schools are better, and their churches have more adequate resources to provide greater services to their membership. However, if you live in an area that was mostly socially and economically disadvantaged, then your schools have less, your community is not as vibrant and your places of worship may only produce a certain level of service to its membership. Therefore, this project will provide results and action items for churches, communities, corporations and government to implement in order to illuminate systemic discrimination and advance economic development in socio-economic disadvantaged communities. It is believed that churches, community-based organizations, and corporations can collaborate to address social justice, criminal justice, economic justice, environmental justice and racial justice concerns, and as a consequence, bring about "social change" and a positive impact upon the equality, equity and economic stability of the society.

There are several biblical texts that are relational to the personal mission and calling, which leads to this particular area of focus. For example, Luke 4:18-19 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the

acceptable year of the Lord." This scripture launched my personal calling to preach and minister the Word of God. Jesus spoke a parable to his disciples in Matthew the twenty-fifth chapter, verses thirty-five through forty (New Revised Standard Version), which exclaimed:

> for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'

We all have a responsibility to attend to the needs of those who may be considered "the least." As a consequence, prayerfully the results of this project will reveal the type of communal collaboration needed to bring a positive change to the individuals in the communities in which we matriculate, serve and support.

However, Acts of the Apostles chapter two, verses forty-two through forty-seven (King James Version) will also be explored, which denotes:

> And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

The focal point of thoughts of consideration to investigate within this pericope is "had all things common," located in verse forty-four. The early church will be highlighted from the perspective of unity, togetherness, sharing and equality, which ensured that all individuals in this community of new believers had everything they needed, naturally and

spiritually. If this is workable for the early church, then this should also be applicable for today.

In regard to the selected foundational Bible text, the King James Version is highlighted above due to the writing style of the King James Version. However, the text will be reviewed in different translations of the pericope starting with the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), which is noted as the preferred translation for an exegetical analysis, based upon Michael Gorman, *Elements of Biblical Exegesis: A Basic Guide for Students and Ministers.*[1] Acts chapter two verses forty-four through forty-seven reads:

> They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved. (NRSV)

The literary study of this pericope begins by comparing and contrasting the differences of words in the NRSV of the Bible in relationship to other translations, which include the New English Translation (NET), the New American Standard Bible (NASB), the English Standard Version (ESV). Verse forty-two in the NRSV and the ESV, is relatively very similar. However, between the four versions, the NASB, has the greatest amount of difference, whereas this translation denotes the words, "were continually devoting" in the first part of the verse. Additionally, the NET and the NASB versions highlight a difference between the other versions in regard to "prayer," whereas they express that

[1] Michael J. Gorman, *Elements of Biblical Exegesis: A Basic Guide for Students and Minister* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 945, Kindle.

these new believers devoted themselves “to” prayer, as opposed “to the breaking of bread and the prayers,” as referenced in the NRSV and the ESV.

Verse forty-three highlight a variety of the differences between each of the four versions. Upon the beginning of the verse, the NET uses the word “Reverential,” and the NASB introduces the verse with “Everyone kept feeling a sense of.” Each of the translations uses the word “awe,” which appears to highlight the amazement that everyone experienced based upon the “wonders and signs” that followed the devotion demonstrated by all those who were devoted to the teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread and prayer highlighted verse forty-two. One of the other major difference between the four versions in verse forty-three is where the NASB and the ESV, indicates that the “wonders and signs” were performed “through” the apostles, as opposed to being “done by” the apostles as highlighted in the NRSV or “came about” as highlighted in the NET. Additionally, the NET is the only version that describes “signs” as “miraculous.”

Verse forty-four carries the main theological foundation for the dissertation. The latter part of the verse denotes that these believers had “all things in common.” However, the major difference in verse forty-four is revealed in the NET, which denotes that these believers “held everything” in common. All four translations share the premise that all “believed;” however, the NRSV, NET and ESV denote “all who believed,” but the NASB denotes “all those who had believed,” which adds a past tense perspective to the pericope.

Each of the translations in verse forty-five continues with the principle of “all things common” whereas those who believed “began selling” their “property,” “possessions” and or “belongings.” As a consequence of this principle, the believers made sure that everyone in this community of believers had everything they needed. The

greatest difference between these translations in verse forty-five is located in the NASB, which denotes that the believers “were sharing them with all.”

There are multiple differences between the four versions in verse forty-six. The NRSV, NASB and ESV denote that the believer was together “day by day;” however, the NET denotes that they “continued to gather” “every” day. Additionally, the NET is the only version which re-addresses that the believers gathering is by “common consent.” The NASB highlights that the believers gathered “with one mind.” The NRSV simply mentions that they “spent much time together.” Each version reflects how the believers’ meetings were in connection with the “temple.” Thus, it appears that they met in the temple; however, the ESV highlights a significant difference, whereas it mentions that the believers where “attending” the temple. Nevertheless, it appears that each version reveal that these believer’s gatherings included home meetings and meals. Each version, also, highlight that during the gatherings the believers were “glad” to their “heart” based upon these activities.

In regard to verse forty-seven, there are minimum difference between each of these four versions. The NRSV and the NET denote that due to “praising God,” the believers had the “good will” of all the people. The NASB and ESV denote that due to “praising God,” the believers had “favor with” all the people. The pericope concludes with each version revealing the results of the believer’s fellowship yielding new souls being added to the church on a daily basis.

As critical review, the different translations of Acts 2:42-47, we have to initially denote that the Book of Acts is typically recognized as a continuation of the Gospel of Luke, which is attributed to the disciple Luke, as referenced in a number of

commentaries, such as David A. DeSilva's "*An Introduction to the New Testament.*"[2] Additionally, several commentators, including DeSilva, reveal that the Book of Acts is not a historical review of the Gospel of Luke, but again the Book of Acts is regarded as a continuation of the Gospel of Luke. Brandon D. Crowe highlights in his book review of Craig S. Keener's book *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary* that "Keener sees Acts "not merely as a historical record" although it is that but also as a model for the continuing work of [Luke's] own day (p. 509), which seems to translate into our own day as well."[3]

As previously mentioned, verse forty-two does not indicate a great difference between the four translations evaluated. However, the NASB version difference of this verse appears to bring more intentionality to the text, because it denotes that these new believers, "were continually devoting," as opposed to simply "devoting" themselves to the "apostles' teaching and fellowship," as referred to in the NET, or the being "devoted," as referred to in the NRSV and the ESV. Another significant difference revealed in verse forty-two is located in the NET and NASB versions, which reveal that the believers devoted themselves "to" prayer, which appears to signify a difference in a general prayer the believers may have prayed, as opposed to "the" prayers, as referenced in the NRSV and ESV versions, which appears to signify a difference in a specific prayer the believers may have prayed.

Although each translation uses the word "awe" upon the initiation of verse forty-three; however, the NET utilizes the adjective "Reverential," which appears to add a

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[2] David A. DeSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament: Context, Methods and Ministry Formation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 298.

[3] Brandon D. Crowe, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012), 392.

certain level of reverence and or spiritual awareness and honor of the amazement in which the believers felt based upon the "signs and wonders," which came about as a result of the manifestation of the presence of the "comforter," as promised by Jesus in the Gospel according to John (14:16 and 26), as well as the response to activity of the believers highlighted in verse forty-two. Additionally, the NASB and the ESV import that the "signs and wonders" were performed "through" the apostles, which seems to denote that the apostles were used by God as conduit for the activities to appears; however, the NRSV and the NET is concerning because they highlight that the "signs and wonders" were "done" or "came about" "by" the apostles, which appears to signify that they were able to perform these activities.

As previously mentioned, verse forty-four purports a great amount of commonality between the four translations. The NRSV, NASB and ESV versions all highlight that the believers had "all things in common;" however, the NET version denotes that the believers "held everything" in common. Nevertheless, according to the NET, the Greek work "held" references to mean "had" (Acts 2:44 New English Translation). Therefore, there does not appear to be any significant differences between the four translations for verse forty-four. Additionally, there does not appear to be any significant difference between these four translations in verse forty-five in regard to "all things in common." However, the NASB denotes that the believers "were sharing them with all" actually brings about greater definition to the activity of the believers having "all things common." This version appears to clarify the responsibility of "sharing" so that all those involved in the fellowship had nothing lacking but had everything they needed. According to Bruce M. Metzger, Professor of New Testament at Princeton

Theological Seminary, in *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, several manuscripts omit several words "were" and "and" in verse forty-four making the verse short; however, the "NRSV is based on the longer reading," which includes the "were" and "and."[4] Nevertheless, as previously mentioned, the meaning of the verse remains the same.

As previously mentioned, there are multiple differences between the four translations analyzed in verse forty-six; however, there are only a few areas that should be critical reviewed. Each translation implies that the believer gathered together "Every day" or "day by day," but the NET stresses that these believers gathered together by "common consent," which continues a philosophical perspective of the consistency of the "common" perspective of these believers highlighted in verse forty-four. Additionally, "common consent" in the NET appears to highlight a greater responsibility of purpose in which these believers agree to be gathering, whereas they have a unified agenda, a reason and or a goal that they intend to reach by being on "one accord," as mentioned in Acts Chapter Two verse one in the King James Version. This sentiment is also highlighted in the NASB translation, which mentions that the believers gathered with "one mind." Finally, the NET highlights an additional attribute in this regard, whereas this version highlights the "sharing" of their food. The NRSV and the ESV addresses this attribute as "generous," and the NASB reveals the attribute as "sincerity of heart." These essential attributes reveal the core of the project, which is that this community of believers would not be able to have "all things common," if there was no sharing, generosity and sincerity within the community.

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[4] Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Guide to the Greek New Testament* (Stuttgart, Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft German Bible Society, 2006).

As previously mentioned, in verse forty-seven there is minimal difference between each of the translations analyzed. Although the NRSV and the NET address the believers as having the "good will" of all the people, and the NASB and the ESV denote that the believers had "favor with" all the people; the NET references the "good will" as "favor" (Acts 2:47 NET). Therefore, there appears to be no significant difference between these translations. The result of this "good will" or "favor" yields that new souls were added to that church on a "day by day" (NRSV, NASB, ESV) or "every day" (NET) basis, highlighted in each translation, respectively. In light of the context of the dissertation, verse forty-seven culminates a very favorable result of these new believers who had "all things common," which is that these new believers became such a powerful "witness" to the general community, at-large. As a consequence, the church gained new converts or believers, which would allow the expansion of resources to a larger section of the community and more people would have access to all their needs being met.

Acts 2:42-47 was selected as the biblical foundation for the dissertation, because it reveals caring, sharing, and giving, which are all necessary attributes of inclusion, equity and of a common community. Acts Chapter Two launches the evidential fulfillment of Jesus' promise that the "Comforter" would come (John 14:16, 26), which was declared before his crucifixion, but even more importantly, after his resurrection in Acts Chapter One. Jesus exclaimed in Acts Chapter One verse eight that the believers would "receive power when the Holy Spirit has come" and they would be "witnesses in Jerusalem." Therefore, we see the promised "comforter" of Jesus Christ fall upon those believers on the day of Pentecost. This agency brings power, and the believers become

witnesses. Peter was the first to stand to preach the Good News of Jesus Christ and three thousand souls were saved.

As a consequence, the selected pericope is strategically located at the end of Acts Chapter Two, which is immediately after Peter has preached, souls are saved and now there is an addition to the family of believers which establishes a new community with varying needs, concerns and expectations in which the disciples have a responsibility to address. Acts Chapter Two verse forty-two through forty-seven, according David S. Dockery in the *Holman Bible Handbooks*, highlights this section of scripture as the "Life of the Community," and he states:

> The concluding verses of chapter 2 comprise a summary of the community life in the early Jerusalem church. They emphasize the remarkable unity of the early Christians. Note the qualities that marked their common life. They gave their attention to the *apostles' teaching*: They were eager to learn all they could about their Lord. They gave themselves to one another in their *fellowship* together. They shared at the table: *Breaking bread* probably included both a common meal and the Lord's Supper. They *prayed* together. Their witness was marked by *signs and wonders*. They continued to experience the power of the Spirit. They *shared*, not only of themselves but of their *possessions*: They held everything in common and gave freely to the needy. They met regularly with fellow Christians in *household fellowship* and continued to worship and witness in the Jewish *temple*. It was an ideal time. God blessed their faithfulness. They grew steadily in numbers day by day.[5]

Dockery provides a very descriptive outline of this pericope, which establishes the tone for triumph with this body of believers. Consequently, Harold W. Attridge in *The Harper Collins Study Bible* identifies this section of scripture as "Life among the Believers."[6]

Therefore, upon analyzing the outline of the pericope, the *Analytical Bible Expositor of Acts* by John G. Butler outlines Acts Chapter Two as the "Activity of the

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[5] David S. Dockery, *Holman Bible Handbook* (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 1992).

[6] Harold W. Attridge, *The Harper Collins Study Bible* (San Francisco, CA: HarperOne, 2006), 1861.

Believers" (v. 42), the "Awe of the Believers" (v. 43a) "Awe came upon everyone," the "Acts of the Believers" (v. 43b) "many signs and wonders were done by the apostles," the "Altruism of the Believers" (v. 44, 45), and the "Adoration by the Believers" (v. 47).[7] A review of the pericope, the following outline is proposed:

I. Community Dedication/Devotion (v. 42)

II. Community Manifestation (v. 43)

III. Community Collaboration (v. 44)

IV. Community Participation (v. 45-46)

V. Community Celebration (v. 47a)

VI. The Community's Salvation (v. 47b)

Based upon the outline analysis, the "Community of Believers" is within the community at-large. These individuals, who are amazed by the Pentecostal demonstration are impacted by Peter's sermon, become new followers of Jesus Christ, and as a consequence, join the Community of Believers, who are devoted and dedicated to the apostle's teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread and prayers. As a result of this community's dedication, there is manifestation of many signs and wonders, which was performed by the apostles. Based upon the manifestation, we see collaboration and within the community, these new believers have "all things in common." There is continued participation by the selling of goods, distribution of resources to those who have needs and daily fellowship in the temple and in homes, and the believers share out of the goodness of their hearts. These unusual activities lead to celebration amongst the inside

[7] John G. Butler, *Analytical Bible Expositor of Acts* (WORDsearch Database, LBC Publishing, 2009).

community of believers, and they become such great "witnesses" to the community at-large, whereas salvation came, and even more souls were won to the Kingdom of God.

The selected pericope by which the revelation of sharing between the new believers became an early church model and is connected to a larger context of activities both in the Book of Acts, as well as in other relevant scriptures. The analysis of several commentators provided excellent thought on a variety of outlines. The broadest outline of the Book of Acts was found in the *Life Application Bible,* which separates the entire book into two segments, I. Peter's Ministry (Acts 1:1-12:25) and II. Paul's Ministry (Acts 13:1-28:31).[8] The most detailed outline located was in DeSilva's *An Introduction to the New Testament*, whereas he identifies Chapter One of the Book of Acts as the "Prologue, commissioning of the apostles and restoration of the Twelve."[9] DeSilva continues to outline the Book of Acts as the following: "The rebuilding of the "house of David," (2:1-9:31), The firstfruits of the Gentile mission, (9:32-12:25), "Paul's missionary journeys," (13:1-21:14), and "Paul's journey to Rome," (21:15-28:31)."[10]

In a more intimate outline, Butler identifies this section of scripture (Acts 2:42-47) as "The Society of Believers," which is located after the first two sections of Acts Chapter Two, which includes, "The Spirit Arrives" (Acts 2:1-12) and "The Sermon by Peter" (Acts 2:14-40) but before Acts Chapter Three, where Butler highlights "The Miracle by Peter" (Acts 3:1-10) and "The Message by Peter" (Acts 3:11-26).[11]

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[8] Ronald A. Beers, *Life Application Study Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1989).

[9] DeSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament,* 358.

[10] DeSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament,* 358.

[11] Butler, *Analytical Bible Expositor of Acts*.

Each of these views provide relevant consideration to the general overview of where the selected pericope in located in the Book of Acts. In regard to the larger context of the selected scripture, it is relevant to connect Acts 2:42-47 with another section of scripture in Act which is chapter 4:32-37, which Attridge in the *Harper Collins Study Bible* highlights as the "second summary of the common life of believers (cf. 2:42-47 emphasizes the sharing of property in a way consistent with the Hellenistic idea of friendship."[12] Additionally, in relationship to the larger context, Attridge's perspective of a third summary of the community life, which is highlighted in Chapter Five verses twelve through sixteen. These summaries surely share the same ideology and perspective of ensuring that everyone within the community had their needs met and no one went lacking.

These larger context within Acts also extend themselves to other scriptures in the New Testament, such as Matthew 25:35-40 where Jesus shares the responsibility that believers have to provide food, clothing and shelter for the "least" of those in our midst. Another larger contextual perspective is shared in the Old Testament, as well in such scriptures as Deuteronomy Chapter 15:4-11:

> There will, however, be no one in need among you, because the Lord is sure to bless you in the land that the Lord your God is giving you as a possession to occupy, if only you will obey the Lord your God by diligently observing this entire commandment that I command you today. When the Lord your God has blessed you, as he promised you, you will lend to many nations, but you will not borrow; you will rule over many nations, but they will not rule over you. If there is among you anyone in need, a member of your community in any of your towns within the land that the Lord your God is giving you, do not be hard-hearted or tight-fisted toward your needy neighbor. You should rather open your hand, willingly lending enough to meet the need, whatever it may be. Be careful that you do not entertain a mean thought, thinking, "The seventh year, the year of remission, is near," and therefore view your needy neighbor with hostility and give nothing; your neighbor might cry to the Lord against you, and you would

[12] Attridge, *The Harper Collins Study Bible*, 1863.

> incur guilt. Give liberally and be ungrudging when you do so, for on this account the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake. Since there will never cease to be some in need on the earth, I therefore command you, "Open your hand to the poor and needy neighbor in your land."

Isaiah 58:7, also provides perspective by stating: "Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

Finally, John R. W. Scott in *The Message of Acts* denotes this passage of scripture as, "The Church's Life: The Effect of Pentecost."[13] Each of these commentaries segregate and separate this segment of scripture as being together. This pericope, which reflects "The Life of the Community," "Life among the Believers," and or "The Church's Life," embodies what appears to be the result of becoming a believer in Jesus Christ and being filled with power of the Holy Spirit. As Scott argues, this pericope reveals what the "effect" or the evidence of Pentecost looks like. Salvation in Jesus Christ and being filled with the power of the Holy Spirit brings about an awareness of who God is and initiatives a response of those believers to collaborate and operate in a community of unity, fellowship and friendship, whereas all those in the community has access to everything they need.

In regard to the genre and style of the pericope, it is denoted by various commentators, such as David A. DeSilva in *An Introduction to the New Testament* and Maria Anicia Co in *The Major Summaries in Acts 2,42-47; 4,32-35; 5,12-16*, that the Book of Acts contains a number of speeches and summaries.[14] According to DeSilva,

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[13] John Scott, *The Message of Acts* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1990).

[14] Maria Anicia Co, *The Major Summaries in Acts 2, 42-47; 4,32-35; 5,12-16* (Quezon City, Philippines: RVM Generalate, 1992), 49.

"As much as 30 percent of the book consists of speeches: evangelistic sermons in Acts 2, 3, 13 and 17; speeches in a council's deliberations in Act 15; a farewell speech in Acts 20; defense speeches in Acts 22, 24 and 26."[15] Additionally, Co highlights that the sections of scripture in Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-35 and 5:12-16 by the author include summaries of "concrete individual reports," which include "parallelisms and interruptions" that define the literary activity of the author.[16] Attridge contends that Luke uses the Greek language in writing Acts and that the overall stylistic function of the writing of Luke in Acts is "first person."[17]

Several commentators denote that the Book of Acts is a book of history; however, Attridge argues that the book should be regarded in general as theological narrative.[18] In light of this thought, the Acts 2:42-47 selection of scripture surely appears to be descriptive. Reta Halteman Finger in *Cultural Attitudes in Western Christianity of Goods in Acts 2 and 4* highlights this point, as well, but Finger also addresses the point that it is possible that although this section of scripture may have been descriptive, it does not necessarily denote that this activity was normative form of church life in the first century church.[19] Nevertheless, despite the genre or literary style of this pericope or the continued mention of these new believers having "all things common," it is argued that there surely should be some consideration of these descriptive activities that could be utilized in

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[15] DeSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament,* 351.

[16] Co, *The Major Summaries in Acts 2*, 50.

[17] Attridge, *The Harper Collins Study Bible*, 1856.

[18] Attridge, *The Harper Collins Study Bible*, 1855.

[19] Reta Halteman Finger, *Cultural Attitudes in Western Christianity Toward the Community of Goods in Acts 2 and 4* (Ipswich, MA: The Mennonite Quarterly Review, 2004), 235.

today's post-modern church society which could be a benefit for the members of the church and the community.

In regard to the social and historical setting, several commentators denote that the authorship of Book of Acts is contributed to the disciple Luke and is a continuation of the Gospel of the Luke. Joel B. Green in the *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible* confirms the "traditional identification" that Luke is the author of the third gospel and Acts, but also highlights that this would make Luke the author of 28% of the New Testament.[20] Green continues to highlight Luke as being educated, with financial means and rhetorical training in relationship to Israel's Scriptures, writing from a geographic location fluent in technical or professional writing.[21]

Beverly Roberts Gaventa, Professor of Old Testament Literature and Exegesis at Princeton Theological Seminary, in *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* identify Luke as a physician, who traveled along with the Apostle Paul.[22] This indication is assumed by various commentators including Gaventa, due to several "we" passages in the narration of the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts. According to John T. Carroll in *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, in his article on "The Gospel of Luke," argues that Luke is an educated author who might not be a part of the social and literary elite in the Roman world, but he was familiar with the Hellenistic culture, literary and rhetorical conventions, and had knowledge of the content and use of the idiom of the Greek OT, and as a consequence, hoped his writings would address the educated and

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[20] Joel B. Green, "Luke," in *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. David Noel Freedman (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000).

[21] Green, *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*.

[22] Beverly Roberts Gaventa, "Acts of the Apostles," in *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible,* vol. 5, ed. Katharine Doo Sakenfeld (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2009).

affluent of that time.[23] Furthermore, Carroll highlights in "Evangelist Luke" that Luke's writings, which includes the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of Apostles, highlight an author formed as either a Jew or a God-fearing Gentile drawn to the Jewish religion and practice.[24]

Additionally, Gaventa highlights that Luke addresses both the Gospel of Luke and Book of Acts to Theophilus, which may have been interpreted as "lover of God" or "beloved of God," and this indication could have been seen a group of believers, who are seeking to know the gospel[25] On the other hand, DeSilva denotes that the name Theophilus means "friend of God" (not "God-lover" or "God-fearer,") which appears to be a little contradictory.[26] In regard to the specific audience, there is a number perspectives on this topic. Gaventa also raises the question that Luke's audience may include either Gentile or Jewish followers.[27] Nevertheless it is denoted that Luke's audience in the Book of Acts is a mix of individuals, which started out being Jewish, because of the Pentecostal festival of the day, but the audience is also Gentiles, as well as Greco-Roman, since the Jewish people were under the Roman Empire.

Finally, based upon the diversity of people represented in Acts Chapter Two, who entail individuals of different socially and ethnic backgrounds, beliefs, customs, traditions, as well as geographical locations. It is evident that these individuals also brought varying economic status, as well. This fact has to be the foundation for the

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[23] Carroll, *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*.

[24] Carroll, *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*.

[25] Gaventa, "Acts of the Apostles."

[26] DeSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament.*

[27] Gaventa, "Acts of the Apostles."

reason of the new believers encouraged "all things common" and sharing. As a matter of fact, if all these individuals who became new believers would have been from the same socio-economic status and background, then there would be no need to make these believers whole, spiritually, mentally, physically, politically or financially. Luke continues in this Acts' pericope a perspective of "patronage and reciprocity" that is thoroughly understood in both the Jewish and Greco-Roman societies, but is also addressed in the Gospel of Luke, whereas he highlights "benefactors" in Luke 22:25. According to DeSilva, the infrastructure of this society depended upon a network of "favor and loyalty," whereas social equals where known as friends and "friends possess all things in common."[28] Since the wealth and property during this time was mostly held in the hands of a few, people who found themselves in need of money, resources or any support, had to identify the patronage of another to assist them. As a consequence, this person became the client of a patron and had to publicly return or reciprocate the favor or show their gratitude back to the patron. The individual who assisted with the connection between the patron and client was called a "broker" or a "mediator." DeSilva argues that "Such considerations in the patron-client exchange have an obvious corollary in the church's Christology and soteriology, wherein God, the Patron, accepts Christ's clients (i.e., the Christians) on the basis of the mediator's merit."[29]

Therefore, during these early church times, the New Testament authors used patronage and reciprocity language to clearly understand relationship with God and the

[28] DeSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 130.

[29] DeSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 132.

Messiah.[30] This perspective surely translated to patronage performed by charis or "grace," and the indebtedness remained with the confines of each patron-client (or "friend-to-friend") relationship; however, there was a reciprocal response by the client for the grace that had been shown by the patron, according to DeSilva. As a consequence, DeSilva denotes those who received God's favor were responsible to submit their whole self to God's service, which does not limit itself to honoring God, also to showing love and sharing with fellow believers.[31] This societal philosophy made it easy for these new believers to have "all things common," because they were not only friends, but they were now one family in Christ Jesus.

In relationship to the social, religious and political situation of the mixed multitude of people involved in the saga of the excitement happening in Jerusalem during the time of Acts Chapter Two is complicated. Many commentators, including Gaventa, denote that the Roman Empire is the historical context of the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts.[32] Based upon this historical context, the Roman Empire included the influence of Hellenism and Judaism, according to Charles Puskas and David Crump in *An Introduction to the Gospels and Acts*.[33] Puskas and Crump also denote that Hellenism, which was the spread of Greek culture beyond its homeland by Alexander the Great, and as a consequence, we have the Greco-Roman culture saturated throughout the region,

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[30] DeSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 134.

[31] DeSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 136.

[32] Gaventa, "Acts of the Apostles."

[33] Charles Puskas and David Crump, *An Introduction to the Gospels and Acts* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008).

which includes the Greek language know as *koinē* (lit. "common").[34] Puskas and Crump continue to highlight that this area was, also, inundated with religious diversity, including astrology, magic and divination, mystery religions, Gnosticism, gods and divinized heroes, Hellenistic philosophies and Hellenistic Judaism.[35] Mixed within the vast array of religions was Judaism, which was the religion and way of life of the Jewish people, and it included agreement on monotheism, Torah, Sabbath, and the feasts; however, it also included;

> 1) the Sadducees, who were the party of priestly, urban aristocrats who were favorably disposed to Hellenistic culture but conservative in politics and religion,
>
> 2) the Pharisees, who were lay scholars connected with the synagogue, known for pious living (including prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and tithing) and precise interpretations of the law, especially in the areas of food purity, crops, Sabbath observance, festivals, and family affairs,
>
> 3) Essenes, who were an ascetic group who maintained a strict adherence to the law and were a strict monastic community with an eschatological perspective of the world, and
>
> 4) the Zealots, who were a Jewish resistance group that sought to revive the spirit of the Maccabeans in their revolt against Rome (a.d. 67–70).[36]

As a consequence, the context of the early church included ethic, social and religious diversity, which surely complicated the environment but created a perfect opportunity for God to demonstrate his love toward his people. Moreover, under the rule of Augustus Caesar, Rome became an imperial and world empire, and as a result, construction of buildings and roads where launched, which became a conduit for the expansion of

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[34] Puskas and Crump, *An Introduction to the Gospels and Acts*.

[35] Puskas and Crump, *An Introduction to the Gospels and Acts*.

[36] Puskas and Crump, *An Introduction to the Gospels and Acts*, 32-35.

Christianity.[37] Therefore, the Day of Pentecost in the beginning of Acts Chapter Two set the stage for God to launch His plan to send the power of the Holy Spirit to dwell amongst His people. Some commentators suggest that one of the results of Pentecost was *koinonia,* which according Walter A. Elwell has several meanings, including fellowship and business partnership, as well as it has theological meanings of sharing and participation.[38]

Finally, not only does the social, religious and or political perspective of a people influence the theology of a text, but geography plays an important role in the interpretation of a scripture. According to Gary Gilbert in *The List of Nations in Act 2: Roman Propaganda and the Lukan Response*, Jerusalem established the destination for Jesus' journey, as highlighted in the Gospel of Luke, but the Book of Acts, "Paul undertook numerous travels throughout Syria, Cyprus, Asia Minor, Greece and Italy (Acts 13-28)."[39] As a consequence, Gilbert denotes that geography plays to major factor in how the actions unfold. DeSilva reveals that Luke's Geography in regard to the Book of Acts beginning in Jerusalem and extending to the "end of the earth" (Acts 1:8), which ultimately leads to Paul's ministry climaxing in Rome, may have been Luke's subtle approach with a larger war on the "Roman imperial ideology."[40]

According to Puskas and Crump, unlike the Lukan Gospel which uses Mark as a source for its framework, Acts has no foundational source for its framework, but these

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[37] Puskas and Crump, *An Introduction to the Gospels and Acts*.

[38] Walter A. Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House Company, 1996).

[39] Gary Gilbert, *The List of Nations in Acts 2: Roman Propaganda and the Lukan Response*, vol. 121, *Journal of Biblical Literature* (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002), 497.

[40] DeSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 356.

commentators propose 1) a diary of Paul's travels, 2) early traditions about Paul and 3) traditions about Peter and the Jerusalem church, as possible sources.[41]

In the regard to the history of tradition and transmission, there are a number of commentators providing insight on phrases, motifs and word of the pericope in question. William Willimon in Acts highlights this section of commentary as, "The Gospel Embodied in Community."[42] Based upon Willimon's commentary, in Acts Chapter Two verses one through forty-one, Luke reveals the "enthusiasm" of being filled with the Holy Ghost and the excitement of the result over 3000 souls being saved after Peter preaches the gospel, Willimon highlights that Luke does not stop there, he continues with the "embodiment of the Pentecostal enthusiasm," which takes us to a fourfold embodiment of the gospel through the church.[43] Willimon highlights this "fourfold embodiment" as:

> 1). "They devote "themselves to the apostles' teaching"" (v. 42), whereas "the church moves immediately to the task of teaching, keeping itself straight about what it is and what it is to be about,"
>
> 2). "The church is in fellowship", whereas "The Spirit has produced koinonia", which produces "signs and wonders" and ensures that everyone has "all things in common," (v. 44),
>
> 3). "The church engages in "the breaking of bread"" (v. 42), which is "a mark of unity, solidarity, and deep friendship, a visible sign that social barriers which once plagued these people have broken down,"
>
> 4). "The church also has prayers" (v. 46), which highlights a daily devotional life, and as a consequence, we see a "well-rounded picture of the church, the marks of authentic embodiment of the Spirit in the community's life."[44]

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[41] Puskas and Crump, *An Introduction to the Gospels and Act*.

[42] William Willimon, *Acts, Interpretation Commentary* (Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1973).

[43] Willimon, *Acts, Interpretation Commentary*.

[44] Willimon, *Acts, Interpretation Commentary*.

I. Howard Marshall in *Acts: An Introduction and Commentary*, denotes Acts Chapter Two verses forty-three through forty-seven as, "A summary of life of the early church."[45] Marshall addresses several relevant motifs in the pericope, such as "Wonders and signs" in verse forty-three, which he highlights as words that describe the "mighty works of Jesus."[46] He also highlights the distinctive feature in verses forty-four through forty-five that reveal the way these new believers lived together, sold their possessions and all things common to help those in need, but Marshall denotes that this may not have been unusual, because the Qumran sect operated in this way of life.[47] Marshall identifies verse forty-six, as indicating "religious devotion of the early church was a daily affair," and he addresses the phrases of verse forty-seven as indicating eating together in homes and in the temple; worshipping God as an opportunity to give thanks, and he highlights the later part of verse forty-seven as a responsibility of the new believers to engage "evangelistic activity," which lead to the process of being saved from the sinful people who rejected the Messiah.[48]

Other commentators who provide some very descriptive ideas to several phrases of the Acts Chapter Two verse forty-two through forty-seven pericope is Robert Jamieson, A.R. Fausset and David Brown, who address verses forty-one through forty-seven as, "Beautiful Beginning of the Christian Church."[49] These authors reference

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[45] I. Howard Marshall, *Acts: An Introduction and Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1980).

[46] Marshall, *Acts*.

[47] Marshall, *Acts*.

[48] Marshall, *Acts.*

[49] Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, "The Acts of the Apostles," in *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible* (Hartford, CT: S. S. Scranton and Company, 1871), 176.

"continued steadfastly in" in verse forty-two, as "attended constantly upon," "the apostles doctrine" as "teaching," "fellowship" as "in its largest sense," "breaking of bread" not only as in the Lord's supper, and "prayers," which was probably done in seasons.[50] The author continues to highlight in verse forty-three that "fear came upon every soul," whereas he relates this verse as "awe rested upon the whole community," and the continues with verse forty-six, "daily…in the temple" as observing the hours of Jewish worship."[51] Finally, he relates "Praising God" in verse forty-seven to Ecclesiastes 9:7 "Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works."[52]

One of the main phrases necessary to address in the pericope that has the greatest connection to the project is "all things common" in verse forty-four. Specifically, the word, "common" is essential to define. According to Richard S. Ascough, in *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*, common is relatable to the phrase "Community of Goods," which is not found in the New Testament; however, Ascough highlights the common description of sharing possessions, according to Acts chapter two verses forty-four through forty-seven, is that the believers lived together, sold their possession, such as property and buildings, and gave the proceeds to the apostles for them to share with those in need.[53]

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[50] Jameison, Fausset, and Brown, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 176.

[51] Jameison, Fausset, and Brown, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 176.

[52] Jameison, Fausset, and Brown, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 176.

[53] Richard S. Ascough, "Community of Goods," in *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. David Noel Freedman (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000).

Marshall mentions that Luke uses the summaries of Acts, such as the Chapter Two verse forty-two through forty-seven pericope to separate the incidents of the first part of Acts and to indicate several stages of progress within the church after the Pentecostal experience.[54] He continues to highlight that "Others follow in 4:32–37 and 5:12–16, and have much the same general content as the present passage. Some scholars have found a parallelism between the four items in verse 42 and the contents of the present summary (apostles; all things in common; breaking of bread; praising God), but the parallelism is not especially exact."[55]

As a consequence, the selected pericope in Acts Chapter Two is addressed as summaries in the Acts Chapter Four and Chapter Five. As a matter of fact, Richard I. Pervo in *Acts: A Commentary* denotes that, "The summaries in Acts 2 and 4 showcase the early Jesus movement in Jerusalem as a utopian community in which an entire society operates like a band of friends (or an extended family) by eliminating the barriers imposed by the unequal distribution of wealth."[56] However, the only way such a sacrifice or display of love and humility could be garnered is as a result of a Pentecostal experience, which would lead to an increased level of "friendship." According to Alan Mitchell in his article, "The Social Function of Friendship in Acts 2:44-47 and 4:32-37," he denotes that:

> Friendship was doubtless a vehicle for wealth, status, and power for the ruling elite of Luke's day. Normally, it was formed within social orders, and its benefits were shared by people of the same status. Luke, however, uses friendship to equalize relationships in his own community. He portrays the early Jerusalem community in Acts as a community of friends to show how friendship can

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[54] Marshall, *Acts*.

[55] Howard, *Acts*, 89.

[56] Richard I. Pervo, *Acts: A Commentary* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2009), 90.

> continue across status lines and the poor can be benefited by the rich. Redefining friendship this way helps Luke to achieve his social objective: encouraging the rich to provide relief for the poor of his own community. Barnabas exemplifies the correct attitude here. His example challenges the reciprocity ethic that some of Luke's community may have followed: giving for a return. Luke may question, too, a theological justification for not sharing possessions, and the Greco-Roman cultural attitude that rationalizes the retention of wealth under the guise of being able to bestow future benefits, primarily among one's friends. The story of Ananias and Sapphira accomplishes that. Thus Luke appeals to the Greco-Roman friendship tradition to help his constituent s reimagine the relationship between rich and poor within their own κοινωνία.[57]

In conclusion, it is believed that there is relevancy in relationship with other believers in the Body of Christ. When we are all brothers and sisters in Christ, there should not be disparity, inequity, inequality, injustice or lack in the body of Christ. The Body of Christ is God's witness to the world, and if the entire body can display wholeness and healthiness, then we become that city which sits on a hill and cannot be hid. In this case, unbelievers are compelled and attracted to the demonstration of unity, love and humility. Andrew Knowles in *The Bible Guide*, highlights that these early church Christians were not forced to sell, give away or share their possessions, which means that someone internal, not external, caused them to be selfless and generous to those in their midst.[58] In summary that it was the power of Pentecost which led these believers to operate in a genuine community of unity, togetherness and ultimately, one accord.

Also, this can be a template and a model for the postmodern church of today. Commentators, such as Reta Halteman Finger in the article, "Cultural Attitudes in Western Christianity of Goods in Acts 2 and 4," address other scholar's concerns as they link the perspective of "all things common" to communism and socialism. Finger

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[57] Alan C. Mitchell, *The Social Function of Friendship in Acts 2:44-47 and 4:32-37*, vol. 111, *Journal of Biblical Literature* (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 1992), 272.

[58] Andrew Knowles, *The Bible Guide* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 2001).

indicates that many biblical interpreters are compelled to downplay the topic of sharing of possessions Acts Chapter Two and Four, because of Western capitalism.[59] Finger also denotes that there has also been an inadequate definition toward communism, because of the "all-or-none" attitude, which suggest that if society embraces sharing of everything in common, then there must be an attitude of sharing "all" things including housing, clothing and food; therefore, everyone in that community would have to be celibate due to close daily contact.[60]

However, the perspective discussed in this work is not an "all-or-none" attitude. The Body of Christ, including predominantly white churches and predominantly black churches, can collaborate and work together to address the specific needs of community, so that everyone's needs are met and no one goes lacking. The suggestion is not communism or socialism, or that anyone should sacrifice their quality of life for another, but the suggestion is that as believers we are more than friends, we are family. Therefore, as family there should be an extra level of care, love and responsibility that we should have for each other and, not just for those who look like us, but also for those who have different backgrounds, upbringings and demographics is than ourselves.

Our salvation through Jesus Christ should accelerate our interest to share, support and seek opportunities to enhance the life of another. That enhancement does not have to entail the giving of one's substance, although in some cases it may, such as in an act of benevolence. However, through a simple act of participating in the fellowship of other believers who are the least, the lost and the left out, will increase awareness of

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[59] Reta Halteman Finger, *Cultural Attitudes in Western Christianity Toward the Community of Goods in Acts 2 and 4* (Ipswich, MA: The Mennonite Quarterly Review, 2004), 268.

[60] Finger, *Cultural Attitudes*, 269.

information and provide access to opportunities that will enhance the quality of life for not just another person, but for every believer! This is not communism or socialism, but this is collaboration for the good of God's people!

The friendship and sharing increases self-esteem and give value to the least, the lost and the left out. Marc Lamont Hill in his book, *Nobody: Causalities of America's War on the Venerable, From Ferguson to Flint and Beyond*, he address the "Nobodyness" syndrome that has plagued American. According to Hill, the characteristics of qualification that make one a "Nobody" is to be vulnerable, subject to State violence, confront systemic forms of State violence, abandoned by the State and considered disposable.[61] However, if we can adopt the early church theology and philosophy of having all things common, "nobodies" can easily become somebody by being brought to the table by another friend, because of a desire to see these individuals do well for themselves and establish a better quality of life.

The entire Gospel of Jesus Christ was built upon prophetic revelation of the coming Savior of the world. Isaiah 9:6 declares: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

The Gospel of John in Chapter Three verse sixteen denotes "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Therefore, when the knowledge of who Jesus Christ is shared, if He is received, those individuals become into greater "awareness" of the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. As a consequence, one's life is changed for the rest of their

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[61] Marc Lamont Hill, *Nobody: Causalities of America's War on the Venerable, From Ferguson to Flint and Beyond,* (New York, NY: Atria Books, 2016), XVII-XIX.

lives because they receive “access” by faith into salvation, grace, mercy and the power of the Holy Spirit, as well as ultimately to Heaven. Based upon the awareness, access to Heaven is gained, which lead to “opportunities” to learn more about God, as well as the things of God. As one gains greater knowledge of God and things of God, through Jesus Christ, then the one who has been empowered with the Holy Spirit takes “action” to become a witness and lead others to Christ. This is the proposed simple “Cycle of Salvation!”

However, the blessing this is illustration is that the same “Cycle of Salvation” is available to each not just in the spiritual, but also in the natural. When the power of the Holy Spirit fell upon the believers in Acts Chapter Two, they received evidence of the power by speaking in unknown tongues. Peter preached a sermon and over 3000 souls were saved. Afterwards, our periscope provides insight that this early church had “all things common.” As previously mentioned, this early church practice could only come about through sharing. These new believers where not only saved to Jesus Christ spiritually, through the “awareness” of the Word of God, but these new believers were saved physically by having “all things common;” therefore, they gained “access” to shelter, food and other resources. As a consequence, through access they had an “opportunity” to grow spiritually and be blessed mentally, emotionally, financially and physically. As a result, these believers must take “action” to grow, flourish and continue the “Cycle of Salvation, or “pay-it-forward” for other believers to have “all things common,” as well.

This is the same “Cycle of Salvation” that should be available in the world today! The church is responsible for perpetuating the “Cycle of Salvation” for others in our

sphere of influence to have “all things common,” as the early church modeled, so that there is no one has lack and so that there is no least, last or left out in our communities today. This awareness was gained beyond the Jewish community and overflowed to the gentiles. Just as the first church community lead in this demonstration of the participation when everyone’s needs were met, this should be the model for the postmodern day church. Everyone should be aware of opportunities for self- improvement and self-empowerment to enhance access to education, employment and entrepreneurship.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

The project's theme is "A Collaboration Model that Enhances the Social Equity of Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Individuals at Urban Empowerment Ministries." This concern is being addressed through empowerment workshops and life skills sessions for the participants and facilitating intentional collaboration with community-based organizations for supportive services and corporations for employment. As previously mentioned, the purpose of this project is to determine whether prophetic leadership may provide spiritual empowerment to individuals through awareness and foster collaboration between the church, Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), and corporations to enhance the social equity of members at Urban Empowerment Ministries, resulting in a better quality of life. Additionally, prophetic leadership will hold educational and informational meetings to bridge the gap between the church, CBOs, and corporations in order to encourage a partnership to address social equity issues within the community.

Based on the desire to address social equity issues with the project, the "Social Gospel" appears to be a relevant theme that would provide a dynamic historical foundation on the subject. The foremost thinker and father of the social gospel theology is Walter Rauschenbusch; therefore, he will be highlighted and his "Social Gospel" theology for the historical framework for the project.

According to Drexel Timothy Brunson in his PhD dissertation, "The Quest of Social Justice: A Study of Walter Rauschenbusch and His Influence on Reinhold Niebuhr and Martin Luther King, Jr.," Rauschenbusch "was born in Rochester, New York on October 4, 1861."[1] Brunson continues to note that "His father, Karl August Rauschenbusch, had come to the United States fifteen years earlier as a Lutheran missionary but subsequently changed to the religious persuasion of the American Baptist."[2] According to Donovan E. Smucker in *The Origins of Walter Rauschenbusch's Social Ethics*, during Rauschbusch's childhood, "Pietism came to him through both the American and German Streams."[3] Smucker continues, stating that "Throughout young Rauschenbusch's high-school years the influence of pietism, sectarianism, and idealism was strong, pietism being the dominant force."[4] Brunson also echoes that sentiment, stating that, "Walter was reared in a pietistic German Baptist environment which would provide the basic and ongoing religious experiences for his life."[5] According to Dictionary.com, pietism is "a movement, originating in the Lutheran Church in Germany in the 17th century, that stressed personal piety over religious formality and orthodoxy."[6]

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[1] Drexel Timothy Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice: A Study of Walter Rauschenbusch and His Influence on Reinhold Niebuhr and Martin Luther King, Jr." (PhD diss., Florida State University, 1980), 13.

[2] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 13.

[3] Donovan E. Smucker, *The Origins of Walter Rauschenbusch's Social Ethics* (Montreal, Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994), 13.

[4] Smucker, *The Origins of Walter Rauschenbusch's Social Ethics*, 14.

[5] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 13.

[6] "Pietism," Dictionary.com, accessed February 16, 2020, https://www.dictionary.com/browse/pietism?s=t.

Once Rauschenbusch completed high school, he continued his college education in Germany where he enrolled in Evangelical Gymnasium at Gutersloh in Westphalia, in 1879, and graduated in 1883.[7] Rauschenbusch returned to the United States and studied at the University of Rochester, where he graduated from Rochester Theological Seminary in 1885.[8]

After Rauschenbusch graduated from seminary, he took on his first pastorate in New York City at the Second German Baptist Church, which was located on West Forty-Fifth Street in a depressed area known as Hell's Kitchen.[9] Based upon his exposure and experience during his pastorate and dealings in this area, Rauschenbusch began to have "changes in his patterns of thought and behavior."[10] With the backdrop of his pietism, "he needed to probe further into the meaning of capitalism and industrialism;" as a consequence, his desire to bring a resolve to social concerns were birthed, and "he had seen the necessity of transforming the entire social order along the Christian pattern."[11] Additionally, according to Smucker:

> In ten years he had fully prepared himself for his definitive formulation of the social gospel. Pietism, sectarianism, liberalism, and transformation it's Calvinism and Catholicism were all present in this experience. Teaching, writing, and extensive involvement in the social life of Rochester and social movements outside of the city would be his next frontier.[12]

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[7] Smucker, *The Origins of Walter Rauschenbusch's Social Ethics*, 14-15.

[8] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 14.

[9] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 14.

[10] Smucker, *The Origins of Walter Rauschenbusch's Social Ethics*, 17.

[11] Smucker, *The Origins of Walter Rauschenbusch's Social Ethics*, 17-18.

[12] Smucker, *The Origins of Walter Rauschenbusch's Social Ethics*, 18.

In addition to Rauschenbusch's dealings within the area he pastored, he also "accepted a faculty position at Rochester Theological Seminary" in 1897, "first in New Testament, then moved to Church History in 1902."[13]

Gary Dorrien, in his book *Breaking White Supremacy: Martin Luther King Jr. and the Black Social Gospel*, reveals that "On social gospel Socialism, Walter Rauschenbusch was the foremost intellectual influence" on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.[14] As a matter of fact, Paul Minus, in *Walter Rauschenbusch: An American Reformer*, highlights that King mentioned 'Rauschenbusch "gave to American Protestantism a sense of social responsibility that it should never lose."[15] Moreover, Rauschenbusch is known by many as "America's most satisfying social prophet."[16]

There are a number of reasons for the decision to utilize Walter Rauschenbusch as the figure for the historical foundation of the research on "Social Equity," including his pietism philosophy, as previously mentioned, but also his theology and literary works. In regard to his works, it is noted by many that *Christianity and the Social Crisis* was Rauchenbusch's first major work.[17] Other social gospel books and writings by Rauschenbusch include *Christianizing the Social Order, A Theology for the Social Gospel, The Social Principles of Jesus, Dare We Be Christians, For God and the People,*

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[13] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 20.

[14] Gary Dorrien, *Breaking White Supremacy: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Black Social Gospel* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018), 18.

[15] Paul M. Minus, *Walter Rauschenbusch: An American Reformer* (New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1988), preface.

[16] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 29.

[17] Benson Y. Landis, *A Rauschenbusch Reader* (New York, NY: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1957), preface.

Prayers of the Social Awakening, and *A Social Litany*, to name a few. Harry Emerson Fosdick, in the introduction of Benson Landis' book *A Rauschenbusch Reader*, highlights that Rauschenbusch "did not speak for himself alone; he was the voice of his generation's Christian protest against the evils of an industrialized society which nineteenth-century capitalism was powerless to remedy."[18]

Charles Marsh, in his book *The Beloved Community: How Faith Shapes Social Justice, from the Civil Rights Movement to Today*, quotes Rauschenbusch from his book *A Theology for the Social Gospel*:

> A kingdom theology involves "the redemption of social life from the cramping influence of religious bigotry, from the repression of self-assertion in the relation of upper and lower classes, and from forms of slavery in which human beings are treated as mere means to serve the ends of others . . . the redemption of society from political autocracies and economic oligarchies; the substitution of redemptive for vindictive penology; the abolition of constraint through hunger as part of the industrial system; and the abolition of war as the supreme expression of hate and the completest cessation of freedom.[19]

It is clear that Rauschenbusch's writings reveal his heart and personal passion for the equality of people through the social gospel, but his writings also challenged mainstream Christianity.

As a consequence, the foundation of Rauschenbusch's writings is based upon his theological thought of several themes and topics. Brunson provides a great overview of Rauschenbusch's major theological themes including "The Kingdom of God," "The Kingdom of Evil," as well as "Justice in the Social Order," which includes "Doctrine of

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[18] Landis, *A Rauschenbusch Reader*, xxii.

[19] Charles Marsh, *The Beloved Community: How Faith Shapes Social Justice, from the Civil Rights Movement to Today* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2004), 54.

Salvation" and "Rauschenbusch's Case Against Capitalism."[20] These theological themes and other topics which bring relevant thought to Rauschenbusch's theology of the social gospel will be discussed later within this chapter; and they serve to justify the selection of Walter Rauschenbusch as the principal figure of consideration for the historical foundations chapter.

As previously mentioned, Walter Rauschenbusch is known as America's social prophet.[21] Although Rauschenbusch's theological thought appears to fall predominantly under the umbrella of the "Social Gospel," which includes a number of themes that have been mentioned earlier in this project and will be addressed further; however, his vast study and insight allowed him to address a number of topics that are worth highlighting. According to Smucker, "Pietism, sectarianism, liberalism, and transformationist Calvinism and Catholicism were all present in his experience."[22]

In Smucker's *The Origins of Walter Rauschenbusch's Social Ethics*, he notes that pietism was "one of the most powerful post-Reformation Christian movements" and was in some ways synonymous with evangelism.[23] Smucker also notes that pietism began in Germany in the seventeenth century and had a great impact in England and America.[24] The situations surrounding Rauschenbusch's New York pastorate in the Hell's Kitchen

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[20] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," vi-vii.

[21] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 29.

[22] Smucker, *The Origins of Walter Rauschenbusch's Social Ethics*, 18.

[23] Smucker, *The Origins of Walter Rauschenbusch's Social Ethics*, 21.

[24] Smucker, *The Origins of Walter Rauschenbusch's Social Ethics*, 21.

area activated his pietism, and according to Smucker, "some of the basic origins of Rauschenbusch's ethics are to be found in this legacy of pietism."[25]

In regard to the topic of "sectarianism," Smucker continues to note that sectarianism was a major influence on Rauschenbusch and shaped his thinking.[26] Smucker notes that Rauschenbusch's "Kingdom of God ethics originated in a very free and original appropriation of sectarian motifs."[27] Additionally, "Anabaptist prophetism suggested to [Rauschenbusch] the revolutionary impact of the Kingdom of God in attacking both church and society."[28] Sectarianism and this perspective of the Kingdom of God became the key to Rauschenbusch's theology.[29]

In regard to Rauschenbusch's "liberalism," Smucker notes that Rauschenbusch "derived much of his content from the new liberalism of the day."[30] Moreover, Smucker notes that:

> From the socioeconomic thinkers and movements come six formidable contributions to Rauschenbusch's ethics: a theology of social institutions, an economic interpretation of ethics, the value of socialism, the doctrine of progress, a historical perspective stressing the uniqueness of the new social concern, and an eclectic spirit.[31]

Finally, in relation to transformationist perspective, Smucker highlights that "Transformationists have a positive and hopeful attitude towards culture, based on the

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[25] Smucker, *The Origins of Walter Rauschenbusch's Social Ethics*, 21.

[26] Smucker, *The Origins of Walter Rauschenbusch's Social Ethics*, 30.

[27] Smucker, *The Origins of Walter Rauschenbusch's Social Ethics*, 30.

[28] Smucker, *The Origins of Walter Rauschenbusch's Social Ethics*, 31.

[29] Smucker, *The Origins of Walter Rauschenbusch's Social Ethics*, 31.

[30] Smucker, *The Origins of Walter Rauschenbusch's Social Ethics*, 30.

[31] Smucker, *The Origins of Walter Rauschenbusch's Social Ethics*, 75.

oneness of creation and redemption, incarnation and atonement."[32] Smucker continues to note that prominent factors in Rauschenbusch's teaching included this theological base, which facilitated "development of Christian socialism on the positive side and attacked mammonistic materialism on the other."[33] According to Smucker, there are two basic divisions of transformationist: the Catholics and the Calvinists.[34] As a consequence, Smucker notes that Rauschenbusch was impressed by two Catholic transformationists, Frederick Denison Maurice and Charles Kingsley, who were pioneers of socialist principles, did not agree with capitalism, and rejected competition.[35] Additionally, Rauschenbusch embraced two Calvinist transformationists, Leonhard Ragaz and Herman Kutter, who were vehemently against "wealth, economic exploitation, and the terrible evil of ruthless competition."[36] All of these topics appeared to establish the "Social Gospel" thought of Walter Rauschenbusch.

According to Brunson, "In 1892, [Rauschenbusch] called for the idea of the Kingdom to be at the center of theology," and "in 1912 he made reference to the need for a socialized theology."[37] As a consequence, "The doctrine of the Kingdom of God, for Rauschenbusch, is the social gospel" and he "believes it to be the heart of Jesus's

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[32] Smucker, *The Origins of Walter Rauschenbusch's Social Ethics*, 121.

[33] Smucker, *The Origins of Walter Rauschenbusch's Social Ethics*, 121.

[34] Smucker, *The Origins of Walter Rauschenbusch's Social Ethics*, 121.

[35] Smucker, *The Origins of Walter Rauschenbusch's Social Ethics*, 121.

[36] Smucker, *The Origins of Walter Rauschenbusch's Social Ethics*, 121.

[37] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 30.

teachings."[38] Once the people's interest in the Kingdom was transferred to the church, the interest in the Kingdom declined.[39] However, Brunson highlights that:

> Walter Rauschenbusch's definition of the Kingdom…[was that] the Kingdom of God is humanity organized according to the will of God… Because Jesus revealed the divine worth of life and personality, we must have social order that insures the continued development of both. Furthermore, since love is the highest law of Christ the Kingdom of God implies a progressive reign of love in human affairs.[40]

Generally, in Rauschenbusch's conception of the Kingdom, he "intends that it should meet all the needs of the individual and society."[41] According to Brunson, Rauschenbusch contends that Jesus is the "initiator of the Kingdom of God" through his love and his example, and as a consequence, "the Kingdom is interpreted through Jesus who has love as his supreme method."[42] Therefore, "since love is the supreme law of Christ, the Kingdom of God implies a progressive reign of love in human affairs."[43] This theology confirms Rauschenbusch's theology that "Jesus was concerned with social problems."[44] Additionally, "Rauschenbusch believed that the aims of the social gospel—freedom, justice and solidarity—must be clearly expressed in any theological conception of God."[45]

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[38] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 31.

[39] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 31.

[40] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 36.

[41] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 38 - 41.

[42] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 42.

[43] Walter Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social Gospel* (New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1917), 142.

[44] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 50.

[45] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 46.

In Brunson's work, he also highlights an area of Rauschenbusch's theology within the "Kingdom of God," which is the "Eschatology of the Kingdom of God." This perspective of eschatology encompasses the thought that "God is in history and that he is leading humankind onward toward higher development;" and as a consequence, "Rauschenbusch is concerned with a social order in which the work and freedom of every human being will be honored and protected."[46] Additionally, Rauschenbusch proposes that "social causes contributed to the origin of eschatological ideas."[47] As a consequence, Brunson notes Rauschenbusch's thinking as "The Kingdom of God is always coming; we can never say it is here."[48]

The concluding theological theme in regard to Rauschenbusch's "Kingdom of God" theology, as referenced by Brunson, is "The Social Gospel and Apocalypticism." Brunson notes that "According to Rauschenbusch, Jesus emphasized that the Kingdom was present future, 'he was shaking off catastrophic ideas and substituting development ideas…In short, apocalypticism was part of the environment in which he began his thinking, it was not his personal product; he was emancipating himself from it.'"[49] As a consequence, "Rauschenbusch's method of interpreting the Kingdom of God does not depend upon scholarly exegesis of the biblical material;" he "was interested in changing the world."[50]

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[46] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 64.

[47] Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, 213.

[48] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 66.

[49] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 68.

[50] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 72.

In addition to the major theme of "The Kingdom of God," another foundation of Rauschenbusch's theology of the "Social Gospel" is the "The Kingdom of Evil." Brunson separates Rauschenbusch's "Kingdom of Evil" theology into five segments including: "An Adequate Appreciation of Sin," "Definition of Sin," "The Transmission of Sin," "Collectivities of Evil," and "Organic Conception of Evil."[51]

According to Brunson, "Rauschenbusch argues that religion must possess an adequate appreciation of sin;" and as a consequence, "Rauschenbusch sought to demonstrate that a religious system which does not (1) have an active consciousness of sin and which (2) fails to do justice to the social elements and processes of evil, is incomplete and misleading."[52] According to Rauschenbusch, "it is not easy to define sin, for sin is as elastic and complicated as life itself."[53] However, according to Brunson, "Rauschenbusch decided to contrast sin to righteousness just as he contrasts the Kingdom of Evil with the Kingdom of God."[54] Brunson also notes that:

> According to Rauschenbusch, there are two ways of defining sin in Christian theology. The first is a broad definition which includes everything traceable to human action and all human motives and dispositions which fall short of the will of God. The second definition limits sin to conditions of the souls and the definite acts which are the result of deliberate choice.[55]

As a consequence, "Rauschenbusch believed that traditional, individual theology ignored the problem of the social transition of evil," according to Brunson.[56] Based upon

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[51] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice."

[52] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 73-74.

[53] Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, 45.

[54] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 77.

[55] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 78.

[56] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 84.

Brunson's analysis, Rauschenbusch argues that powerful "super-personal" forces in our communities exercise authority over members of that community, and as a result, "the super-personal force brings the collective body into harmony with itself."[57]

Rauschenbusch's theology of "The Kingdom of Evil" in this regard is essential to his thought of "Collectivities of Evil." In this theology, Rauschenbusch notes that these collectives of evil can deteriorate a society and institutions, and Rauschenbusch felt that during his era, "the church did not teach morality with enough vigor."[58] According to Rauschenbusch, "A realization of the spiritual power and value of these composite personalities must get into theology, otherwise theology will not deal adequately with the problem of sin and of redemption, and will be unrelated to some of the most important work of salvation which the coming generations will have to do."[59]

As a consequence, Brunson notes that Rauschenbusch "felt that the social gospel had succeeded in awakening the social consciousness to the dangers of allowing these forces to become oppressive."[60] Brunson concludes his analysis of Rauschenbusch's "Kingdom of Evil" theology, noting that "Rauschenbusch felt that Satan and his angels were a fading religious entity…We must, however, face the reality of the power and reality of evil in the world," and that this was the importance of the social gospel, because it is the "only influence which keeps alive in modern minds the idea of the Kingdom of Evil."[61]

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[57] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 85.

[58] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 86.

[59] Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, 73.

[60] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 87.

[61] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 88.

Rauschenbusch's writings defined the essence of who Walter Rauschenbusch was in philosophy and theology. His books were very topical in title and also focused on specific themes and topics such as *Christianity and the Social Crisis, Christianizing the Social Order, The Social Principles of Jesus, A Theology of the Social Gospel,* and *Prayers of the Social Awakening*. Brunson's work includes an examination of Rauschenbusch's theology of "Justice in the Social Order" and an analysis of many of Rauschenbusch's previously mentioned writings. Additionally, Benson Y. Landis, in his book *A Rauschenbusch Reader: The Kingdom of God and the Social Gospel,* evaluates Rauschenbusch's social gospel theology utilizing several of Rauschenbusch's previously mentioned writings. Therefore, this chapter will highlight several points from these writings which provide continued insight of Rauschenbusch's social gospel theology.

Brunson initiates his discussion of Rauschenbusch's theology under the heading "Rauschenbusch the Theologian: Justice in the Social Order," where he highlights Rauschenbusch's "Doctrine of Salvation." Here he highlights that Rauschenbusch considered "individual salvation as essential to the process of salvation," and "one of the most practical means for the Christianizing of the social order."[62] As a consequence, Brunson notes that Rauschenbusch "pointed to the social gospel as providing some criteria by which true salvation may be judged."[63] According to Rauschenbusch in *Christianizing the Social Order*, "No man is a Christian in the full sense of the original discipleship until he has made the Kingdom of God the controlling purpose of his life, and no man is intellectually prepared to understand Jesus Christ until he has understood

[62] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 91.

[63] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 92.

the meaning of the Kingdom of God."[64] Additionally, according to Rauschenbusch, "salvation is the voluntary socializing of the soul."[65] As a consequence, Brunson highlights that "Rauschenbusch felt that conversion is valuable because it casts a light upon past sins and across our present social life."[66]

In *Christianity and the Social Crises*, Rauschenbusch note that, "Social religion, too, demands repentance and faith: repentance for our social sins; faith in the possibility of a new social order . . . Regeneration includes that a man must pass under the domination of the Spirit of Christ, so that he will judge of life as Christ would judge of it."[67] Brunson states that "Rauschenbusch continually stressed that there is a need not only for individual, personal salvation, but also for social salvation."[68] As a consequence, Rauschenbusch "informed his readers that social salvation has ethical similarities for mankind just as it does individual salvation."[69] Based upon his social salvation perspective, Rauschenbusch continue with a view of capitalism and the co-operative principle. Rauschenbusch "argued that capitalism had stamped a materialistic impression on our society," but "co-operatives develop persons and educate the community through thoughtful insight."[70] Consequently, Rauschenbusch note that "the co-operative

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[64] Walter Rauschenbusch, *Christianizing the Social Order* (New York, NY: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1912), 48.

[65] Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, 73.

[66] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 93.

[67] Walter Rauschenbusch, *Christianity and the Social Crises In the 21st Century: The Classic that Woke the Church Up* (New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers, 2009), 285-286.

[68] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 96.

[69] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 96.

[70] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 96-97.

associations represent a new principle in economic life, [and are] clearly of higher ethical quality than the principle dominant in capitalism."[71] Therefore, it appears that Rauschenbusch is paralleling capitalism with unrighteousness, and the co-operative principle with righteousness.

Brunson also highlights Rauschenbusch's perspective that the church has a role to play in social salvation.[72] He notes that Rauschenbusch felt that the church was not fully Christianized and had not fully adopted the ideal of the Kingdom of God.[73] He also highlights a number of activities in which the church should engage for the Kingdom to be realized. According to Rauschenbusch, "The church must first of all demonstrate concern with the financial structure of the world."[74] Brunson reflects upon Rauschenbusch's thought that the church had not taught on wealth, guarded against covetousness, or led in social movements, but also he notes that the church must initiate in "more depth full solutions to the problem of poverty."[75] He also provides insight to Rauschenbusch's perspective on Church and State, as he notes that Rauschenbusch "believed deeply in the separation of Church and State, but held that there should be an interpenetration between these two important spheres."[76] Additionally, Brunson notes that Rauschenbusch felt that in order for churches to fulfill their special function in the

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[71] Rauschenbusch, *Christianizing the Social Order*, 387.

[72] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 99.

[73] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 100.

[74] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 100-101.

[75] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 101-102.

[76] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 104.

Kingdom of God, churches must join together, be prepared to address social issues, and come out of "spiritual isolation."[77]

In his conclusion of Rauschenbusch's theology of "Justice in the Social Order," Brunson highlights Rauschenbusch's perspective on capitalism, which, as previously mentioned, he condemned along with competition. According to Brunson, "Rauschenbusch concluded that competition which underlines capitalism is unChristian."[78] Brunson continues to note that "Rauschenbusch holds that economic competition evokes selfishness, covetousness, and cunning rather than mutual interest, goodwill, comradeship and solidarity."[79] Rauschenbusch "criticized the dictatorial and monopolistic character of corporations which form the backbone of capitalism," he criticized capitalism's "inherent dishonesty," and he found "fault with capitalism because of its subservience to provide motive."[80]

Brunson concludes with a few thoughts on Rauschenbusch's "Christian Social Order." He notes that "Rauschenbusch balanced his critique of capitalism with an alternative list of five fundamental requisites for a Christian social order: social justice, collective property rights, industrial democracy, approximate equality, and cooperation."[81] Brunson highlights Rauschenbusch's thoughts and activities in each of the areas, which confirm the reason that Rauschenbusch was highly interested in economic concerns and the Kingdom of God. Rauschenbusch's emphasis on the

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[77] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 105-108.

[78] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 110.

[79] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 110.

[80] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 111-115.

[81] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 117.

economic system is highlighted in *Christianizing the Social Order*, where he notes "the opportunity for every man to realize the full humanity which God has put into him as a promise and a call; it means a clean, rich, just, and brotherly life between him and his fellows; it means a chance to be single-hearted, and not to be coerced into a double life."[82]

As a consequence of Rauschenbusch's theological perspective of the social order, the church has a great responsibility in leading and teaching social consciousness. However, corporations also have a great responsibility in social concerns in spite of capitalism; but if these entities cooperate with each other and intentionally focus on social concerns, then the needs of the entire community will be addressed; and the witness of a Christian nation can be realized.

The briefly aforementioned areas of Rauschenbusch's "Social Gospel" theology are nestled in a number of his writings, books, and speeches. Therefore, as the researcher moves further into this historical analysis, he would like to delve a little deeper into some of Rauschenbush's writings in order to point out some of the topics that have been gleaned and are important to redress.

There are several key insights that have been gleaned from Rauschenbusch's ideology, philosophy, and theology. The foundation of his theology was established in his early childhood and exposure to pietism, though other principles such as sectarianism, liberalism, and transformationist views were also major factors in his social gospel theology. However, the researcher, as a pastor in the current congregational and community context, finds it very appealing that Rauschenbusch's socialist perspectives

[82] Rauschenbusch, *Christianizing the Social Order*, 457.

were elevated during his first pastorate in the Hell's Kitchen area. This informs the researcher that Rauschenbusch's experience and engagement with the people that he shepherded probably had a great impact upon shaping his feeling, emotion, and passion to see change within his context. This is essential because it is easy to hear about the concerns or read about the issues, but until your heart has been impacted by the touch, feel, and pain of the problems of poverty, injustice, inequities, and the racial divide of access to information, education, and employment, it can be difficult to connect to the necessity for change. Moreover, it can be difficult to be passionate when communicating the need for a change to which one does not have a direct connection.

According to Landis, Rauschenbusch's *Christianity and Social Crisis*, published in 1907, was essential to the era in which it was released because it contributed to a "'moralization' and 'humanization' of theology in America."[83] Additionally, Landis notes that Rauschenbusch hoped that the writings would encourage the church to "seek its aid in social reform," and as a consequence, the book addressed "the Hebrew prophets, the social aims of Jesus, the social impetus of primitive Christianity, the handicap of a churchly Christianity that followed the primitive church."[84] The importance of this book is that it addresses the issues demoralizing society and reminds the church of its responsibility to try to address the social crisis in its sphere of influence. This request of engagement by the church is important not only for that time, but surely also within this post-modern day society.

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[83] Landis, *A Rauschenbusch Reader*, 2.

[84] Landis, *A Rauschenbusch Reader*, 2-3.

Another one of Rauschenbusch's important books referenced in Landis' works is *Christianizing the Social Order*. The researcher concurs with Landis' perspective of two important social philosophies noted in this book: "the concept of the Kingdom of God and the ideal of socialism."[85] It is important to note that in this book, Rauschenbusch detailed the specifics of "what the social problems were and what the message of Christianity was."[86] Many of these items have been previously addressed in this chapter; therefore, the researcher briefly notes here his concurrence with Rauschenbusch's conclusion: "We must begin at both ends simultaneously. We must change our economic system in order to preserve our conscience and our religious faith; we must renew and strengthen our religion in order to be able to change our economic system."[87]

Rauschenbusch's *A Theology for the Social Gospel* included his idea of the Kingdom of God and Kingdom of Evil, which have been highlighted earlier in this document. However, the most intriguing point for the researcher in this writing, which is also highlighted by Landis, is that it includes Rauschenbusch's direct articulation of the term "Social Gospel."[88] Although Rauschenbusch found many critics in regard to his "Social Gospel" theology, he also accrued many supporters. As a consequence, we now have the "Black Social Gospel" because of the foundation established by Rauschenbusch to be bold enough to address these principles that developed a social consciousness within the church community and abroad.

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[85] Landis, *A Rauschenbusch Reader*, 38-39.

[86] Landis, *A Rauschenbusch Reader*, 38-39.

[87] Rauschenbusch, *Christianizing the Social Order*, 459.

[88] Landis, *A Rauschenbusch Reader*, 103.

A final book that gave substance and foundation to Rauschenbusch's "Social Gospel" that will be referenced in this document (although there are many others, some of which have been previously mentioned in this document) is *The Social Principles of Jesus*. Rauschenbusch notes in this writing that "This book is not a life of Christ, nor an exposition of his religious teachings, nor a doctrinal statement about his person and work. It is an attempt to formulate in simple propositions the fundamental convictions of Jesus about the social and ethical relations and duties of men."[89] Landis highlights that, in this book, Rauschenbusch revisited his "great theme, the teachings of Jesus in relation to social forces and conditions" and reminded us of the "evils that are caused by unjust social conditions."[90] If we wanted to be like Christ, we have to be conscious and considerate of the things that Christ was concerned about, and social conditions were surely a part of his concern.

Additionally, the researcher really appreciated Rauschenbusch's view of capitalism and the cooperation principle. Moreover, the researcher agrees with Rauschenbusch's criticism of capitalism and his list of five fundamental requisites for a Christian social order, which includes social justice, collective property rights, industrial democracy, approximate equality, and cooperation. In regard to this project, Rauschenbusch's perspective on social justice, approximate equality, and cooperation, in theme, are specifically relatable. For example, since this project is ultimately focused on social justice, it is interesting to know that Rauschenbusch fundamentally considered "the

[89] Walter Rauschenbusch, *The Social Principles of Jesus* (New York, NY: The Women's Press, 1917), 2.

[90] Landis, *A Rauschenbusch Reader*, 90.

establishment of social justice by the abolition of unjust privilege."[91] As a matter of fact, many of his concerns have already been addressed in society such as proper land taxation, public ownership of many modes of transportation, and grants for inventions.[92] Additionally, the researcher concurs with Rauschenbusch's perspective that people are unequal in many of their capacities, but when people draw close together, there is an ability to transcend their obsession with possessions; and, as a consequence, Brunson reveals Rauschenbusch's thought that "love is the revealer of equality."[93] Finally, the researcher completely concurs with Rauschenbusch's perspective on "cooperation," in that "He believed…that the cooperative association represents a higher ethical principle than that of capitalism."[94]

In regard to what is problematic with Rauschenbusch's theology, he surely had a number of critics regarding a number of his theological perspectives. For the sake of brevity, only the concern that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. had with his Kingdom of God theology will be highlighted here, since it is one with which the researcher concurs. Although Dr. King credits Rauschenbusch for providing a theological basis for his social concern in his book *Stride toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story*, he notes that "[Rauschenbusch] had fallen victim to the nineteenth-century 'cult of inevitable progress' which led him to a superficial optimism concerning man's nature. Moreover, he came perilously close to identifying the Kingdom of God with a particular social and economic

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[91] Rauschenbusch, *Christianizing the Social Order*, 335.

[92] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 117-118.

[93] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 122-123.

[94] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 123.

system — a tendency which should never befall the Church."[95] However, according to Brunson, "Rauschenbusch made a distinct and discernible contribution to King's theology and social activities."[96] The researcher concurs with Brunson's conclusion in this regard. Even Dr. King notes that "Rauschenbusch had done a great service for the Christian Church by insisting that the gospel deals with the whole man, not only his soul but his body; not only his spiritual well-being but his material well-being."[97]

In conclusion, it is no doubt that God was pulling on his heart strings in regard to helping the poor and providing equally for the disenfranchised and disadvantaged. The social gospel theology was surely as much a necessity during Rauschenbusch's time as it is now. While this researcher does not see a specific concern for minorities or African Americans, he does perceive that all groups of people were included under the umbrella of Rauschenbusch's social gospel theology. Nevertheless, Rauschenbusch's social gospel theology was necessary and gave birth to the "Black Social Gospel" theology. According to Gary Dorrien in *Break White Supremacy: Martin Luther King Jr. and the Black Social Gospel*, "The black social gospel was emphatically public and political, and thus so is this book. Black social gospel leaders worked hard at building communities of resistance, they operated in the intertwined spheres of religious communities and political movements, and they focused on racial justice."[98]

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[95] Martin Luther King Jr., *Stride toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1958), 91.

[96] Brunson, "The Quest for Social Justice," 431.

[97] King Jr., *Stride toward Freedom*, 91.

[98] Gary Dorrien, *Breaking White Supremacy: Martin Luther King Jr. and the Black Social Gospel* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018), x.

As is commonly known, there are multiple societal, economic, and educational gaps, as well as a variety of resource gaps in the community of the researcher's context. Through inspiration, motivation, and revelation, people's lives can be empowered to the point of encouragement, resulting in a positive impact on their personal visions, purposes, and destinies. However, this study does not only provide the opportunity of ministry for the researcher, it provides an opportunity of ministry for many to be empowered, operate within their gifts, and utilize their talents for the glory of God and to be a blessing to His people. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to highlight the historical foundation which gives support to this project, and Walter Rauschenbusch, along with the "Social Gospel" theology, surely provides a relevant historical foundation for furthering study in this area.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

As highlighted in the biblical foundation chapter, this project is rooted in Acts of the Apostles chapter 2:42-47, which notes:

> They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

The focal point within this pericope is "all things common," located in 2:44. The early church perspective of unity, togetherness, sharing, and equity ensured that all individuals in this community of new believers had everything they needed, naturally and spiritually. Therefore, if this is workable for the early church, then this should also be applicable for church communities today.

This early church practice of having "all things common" could only come about through sharing. These new believers were not only saved by Jesus Christ spiritually through the "awareness" of the word of God, but these new believers were also saved physically by having "all things common;" therefore, they gained "access" to shelter, food, and other resources. As a consequence, through this access they had an "opportunity" to grow spiritually and be blessed mentally, emotionally, financially, and

physically. These believers took “action” to grow, flourish, continue the “Cycle of Salvation,” and pay-it-forward for other believers to have “all things common,” as well.

This is the same “Cycle of Salvation” that should be available in our world today! The church is responsible for perpetuating the “Cycle of Salvation” for others in its sphere of influence to have “all things common,” as the early church modeled, so that no one has lack or is left behind in church communities today. In this pericope, awareness matriculated beyond the Jewish community and overflowed to the Gentiles. Just as the first church community led in this demonstration where everyone’s needs were met, this should be the model for the post-modern day church. Everyone should be aware of opportunities for self-improvement and self-empowerment to enhance access to education, employment, and entrepreneurship.

Within the framework of social justice and addressing the social ills within society, it is difficult to navigate within this subject through the lens of Christianity without coming in contact with the perspective of the “Social Gospel.” As mentioned in the historical foundations chapter, the foremost thinker and father of the social gospel theology is Walter Rauschenbusch. The foundation of his theology was established in his early childhood and exposure to pietism. Other principles such as sectarianism, liberalism, and transformationist views were major factors in his social gospel theology, as well.

Based on the personal passion identified in the synergy chapter, the “all things common” approach of the early church as highlighted in the biblical foundations chapter, and Rauschenbusch’s “Social Gospel” perspective memorialized in the historical foundations chapter, and the theological foundations chapter will investigate liberation

theology with an emphasis on black liberation theology. Liberation theology appears to be the appropriate systematic theology that establishes theoretical processes in order to address the social concerns of society.

According to Robert McAfee Brown in his book *Liberation Theology: An Introductory Guide*, he notes that the initial exploration of liberation theology is not about concepts, ideologies, or principles; it is about people.[1] Brown continues to note that "it's about people who live in very precarious circumstances, who put their lives on the line every day (and night) for their faith."[2]

However, in order to embrace the theology and philosophy of the need for liberation, one must understand poverty. According to Dictionary.com, the general definition of "poverty" is "the state or condition of having little or no money, goods, or means of support; condition of being poor."[3] The United States Census Bureau notes:

> The Census Bureau uses a set of money income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to determine who is in poverty. If a family's total income is less than the family's threshold, then that family and every individual in it is considered in poverty. The official poverty thresholds do not vary geographically, but they are updated for inflation using the Consumer Price Index (CPI-U). The official poverty definition uses money income before taxes and does not include capital gains or noncash benefits (such as public housing, Medicaid, and food stamps).[4]

Additionally, Feeding America notes that:

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[1] Robert McAfee Brown, *Liberation Theology: An Introductory Guide* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), 19.

[2] Brown, *Liberation Theology*, 19.

[3] "Poverty," Dictionary.com, accessed October 30, 2018, https://www.dictionary.com/browse/poverty.

[4] U.S. Census Bureau, "How the Census Bureau Measures Poverty," Income and Poverty, accessed October 30, 2018, https://www.census.gov/topics/income-poverty/guidance/poverty-measures.html.

> Even in the world's greatest food-producing nation, children and adults face poverty and hunger in every county across America. In 2017:
>
> - 40 million people struggle with hunger in the United States, including more than 12 million children.
> - A household that is food insecure has limited or uncertain access to enough food to support a healthy life.
> - Households with children were more likely to be food insecure than those without children.
> - 58% of food-insecure households participated in at least one of the major federal food assistance program — the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly Food Stamps); the National School Lunch Program and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (often called WIC).[5]

The United Nations reported that:

> Many people who live in extreme poverty are often also victims of discrimination on grounds such as birth, property, national and social origin, race, color and religion. Poverty is both a cause and a product of human rights violations. In 2001 the World Conference against Racism in Durban emphasized that poverty, underdevelopment, marginalization, social exclusion and economic disparities are closely associated with racism, and contribute to the persistence of racist attitudes and practices which in turn generate more poverty.[6]

Locally, nationally, and globally, these are staggering statistics and concerns that separate marginalized individuals from access to opportunities necessary for a better quality of life, and as Christians, the church communities should be concerned with the livelihood and wellbeing of humanity.

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[5] "Facts about Hunger and Poverty in America," Feeding America, accessed October 30, 2018, https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/facts#_edn1.

[6] United Nations, "Vulnerable People," Let's Fight Racism, accessed October 30, 2018, http://www.un.org/en/letsfightracism/poor.shtml.

One of the most foremost thinkers and liberation theologians is Gustavo Gutierrez. He is also known as the father of liberation theology.[7] According Gutierrez in his book *A Theology of Liberation: Fifteenth Anniversary Edition*, he notes, "Poverty means death: lack of food and housing, the inability to attend properly to health and education needs, the exploitation of workers, permanent unemployment, the lack of respect for one's human dignity, and unjust limitations placed on personal freedom in the areas of self-expression, politics, and religion."[8] Additionally, Robert McAfee Brown highlights Gutierrez's perspective regarding poverty, noting that "1) Poverty is destructive, 2) Poverty is structural, 3) The victims of Poverty are a social class."[9]

As a consequence, society has a responsibility to address racism, police brutality, poverty, and any other injustices faced by certain members of society. Society includes those individuals connected to community-based organizations, corporations, and the Church. Stanley J. Grenz, in his book *Theology for the Community of God,* discusses the Great Commission, according to the Gospel of Mark 16:15 and the Gospel of Matthew 28:19-20. He notes that "by being a true community of believers, we indicate what the reign of God is like; it is the community of Love."[10] Therefore, if the church is going to model the love of God, spread the love of God, and live out the love of God, the ecclesiology has to include advocation against injustices in society that threaten the

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[7] Gustavo Gutierrez and Gerhard Ludwig Müller, *On the Side of the Poor: The Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015), viii.

[8] Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation: Fifteenth Anniversary Edition* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1988), xxi.

[9] Brown, *Liberation Theology*, 45-46.

[10] Stanley J. Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994), 7455, Kindle.

quality of life for the marginalized and the underprivileged. While there appears to be some reservation amongst certain groups in regard to the church's involvement and engagement in the proclamation of equal rights and social justice, the church's leadership is needed by communities, the country, and the world in addressing poverty, injustice, and other social concerns.

Additionally, Gutierrez continues to note:

> It is important to realize that being poor is a way of living, thinking, loving, praying, believing, and hoping, spending leisure time, and struggling for a livelihood. Being poor today is also increasingly coming to mean being involved in the struggle for justice and peace, defending one's life and freedom, seeking a more democratic participation in the decisions made by society, organizing "to live their faith in an integral way"…and being committed to the liberation of every human being.[11]

Therefore, if the church, community, and corporations are going to address poverty and other injustices within communities, it is going to take an individual commitment to intentional collaboration, as well as a commitment to self, service, and sacrifice. This point is very poignant because in order to address social injustices in society through the lens of liberation theology, those involved must be engaged in policy and practice, but they must also engage with a considerable amount of understanding and realization, which comes through experience and being touched by a situation. Gutierrez notes that "If there is no friendship with them and no sharing of the life of the poor, then there is no authentic commitment to liberation, because love exists only among equals."[12]

Effective and sustainable change must come from the bottom up or must be initiated at the grassroots level. This is the kind of commitment and dedication that is

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[11] Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, xxi-xxii.

[12] Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, xxxi.

fostered and facilitated by those who have experienced the pains of poverty, police brutality, and social and economic injustices, and that creates the social justice and liberation necessary in our communities. Moreover, Brown introduces the responsibility of a "conversion experience" that results from a "point of connection."[13] One may never understand the oppressed, the poor, or the disadvantaged until one has been at the ground level with them. As a consequence, the "conversion experience" may be difficult to realize unless or until one has been in relationship with those who have been affected by such oppression.

In order for individuals to overcome and survive any difficult situation in which they find themselves, they must adopt a certain "mindset." There appears to be a mindset and "hidden rules" that go along with that mindset no matter one's socioeconomic status. If one is wealthy, then there is a mindset and rules, which go along with that status, that position that individual to maintain their current wealth, as well as retain and improve or grow within that status. There is also a mindset for the middle class which allows groups of individuals to maintain their status and continue within their way of life. Similarly, there is a poverty mindset, which includes its own rules, character, and nature, that allows this group of people to stay and survive at this level of life.

In the book *Bridges Out of Poverty: Strategies for Professionals and Communities*, Dr. Ruby K. Payne, Philip E. Devol, and Terie Dreussi Smith discuss the fact that in order to address poverty and other injustices in education or health care, there must be a change in an individual's behavior, as well as the community's approaches, and

[13] Brown, *Liberation Theology*, 22-23.

in political or economic structures.[14] The key point is the "individual's behavior" which is exasperated by a certain mindset. Payne, Devol, and Smith highlight that the first step toward a solution in any of these situations is to accurately name the problem and make the correct diagnosis. In other words, if society is going to procure liberation from the bondage of injustices in the disadvantaged and disenfranchised communities, one has to identify the root of the problem, which is the mindset of the people. Payne, Devol, and Smith note that when individuals in poverty come in contact with the middle class, those in poverty do not have the "assets necessary" to survive in that environment; but the authors also note that when the middle class comes in contact with the wealthy, the middle class does not have the necessary assets to sustain its existence within that environment, either.[15]

Payne, Devol, and Smith continue to note that "Individuals raised in a middle-class environment learn the hidden rules, mindsets, and means of survival the same way persons in poverty or wealth do: through osmosis."[16] As a consequence, each social group takes on the mindset and learns the hidden rules within that social group, simply by existing within the environment of that social group. However, the authors' philosophy for addressing these gaps in society include the necessity of collaboration between entities, agencies, and organizations who have a relationship and desire to achieve common goals. They highlight that "The relationship includes a commitment to: (1) a shared vision and mutual goals; (2) a jointly developed structure, shared responsibility,

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[14] Ruby Payne, Philip E. Devol, and Terie Dreussi Smith, *Bridges out of Poverty: Strategies for Professionals and Communities* (Highland, TX: Aha! Process, Inc., 2006), 268-269.

[15] Payne, Devol, and Smith, *Bridges out of Poverty*, 273-275.

[16] Payne, Devol, and Smith, *Bridges out of Poverty*, 274.

and agreed-upon methods of communication; (3) mutual authority and accountability for success; and (4) sharing of resources and rewards."[17]

Therefore, the meeting places for addressing the dire situations in communities and bringing liberation to those in poverty are the entities, agencies, and organizations, including the church, which are typically managed by the middle class who implements policies created by the wealthy, as noted by Payne, Devol, and Smith.[18] This issue has mostly resulted in no one really understanding or intimately relating to each other, because each social group is trying to give and take from the other through the lens of a hidden rule, which makes it difficult for the strategy to work successfully.

Based on this perspective, in order to address poverty and other educational and economic injustices, individuals and entities must engage in "intentional collaboration," which should include establishing relationships with each other to understand and break down the mindset barriers within each respective social group, and embrace the fact that each mindset must be relinquished in order to work together to achieve liberation for all. In other words, all who participate in the process of liberation must possess a change in perspective and mindset in order to understand, as well as create policies, practices, and protocols to eliminate and eradicate injustices in society.

As this project transitions into the history, description, and definition of liberation theology, it is helpful to highlight another view of poverty, as outlined by Gustavo Gutierrez. He notes that:

> An essential clue to the understanding of poverty in liberation theology is the distinction, made in the Medellín document "Poverty of the Church," between three meanings of the term "poverty": real poverty as an evil—that is something

[17] Payne, Devol, and Smith, *Bridges out of Poverty*, 174.

[18] Payne, Devol, and Smith, *Bridges out of Poverty*.

> that God does not want; spiritual poverty, in the sense of a readiness to do God's will; and solidarity with the poor, along with protest against the conditions under which they suffer.[19]

According to Gutierrez, this definition establishes the context for liberation theology as "the preferred option for the poor," which will be discussed later in this document. Furthermore, Gutierrez continues to note that:

> Behind liberation theology are Christian communities, religious groups, and peoples, who are becoming increasingly conscious that the oppression and neglect from which they suffer are incompatible with their faith in Jesus Christ (or, speaking more generally, with their religious faith). These concrete, real-life movements are what give this theology its distinctive character; in liberation theology, faith and life are inseparable. This unity accounts for its prophetic vigor and its potentialities.[20]

When thinking of liberation theology, the author reflects upon the foundational scripture of personal calling as previously mentioned, which is Luke 4: 18-19 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord." This pericope is not only Jesus' acceptance of the call into his public ministry, but also as his job description for liberation as he read in the synagogue from the Isaiah text. Jesus' assignment from the Father was one of bringing redemption and salvation of lost souls back to the Father, but it was also an assignment of bringing freedom, deliverance, and liberation to those who were oppressed by the governmental rulership of that day. This is an assignment that followers of Christ should continue in this postmodern day time.

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[19] Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, xxv.

[20] Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, xix.

This text which outlines Jesus' job description for liberation includes several roles and responsibilities that are necessary to highlight. First and foremost, Jesus is given permission to function in this assignment, because the Spirit of the Lord is upon Him, which means that he is anointed by the Holy Spirit to perform these tasks. Additionally, he is anointed to preach, heal, bring deliverance, recovering of sight and liberty, which describes what he is anointed or called to do. It is within these specific functions that we identify the assignment of liberation. According to Warren Baker, Eugene E. Carpenter, and Spiros Zodhiates in the *Complete Word Study Bible Old and New Testaments*, in this text the words "deliverance" and "liberty" in the Greek are *aphéseōs*, which means to release one's sins from the sinner, forgiveness, and remission; but it also means to cause to stand away.[21] Therefore, in regard to liberation, Jesus leads the way in bringing deliverance and liberty, forgiveness and salvation, as well as freedom and healing, to those with whom he came in contact, in order that they "stand away" from poverty, bondage, brokenness, bigotry, racism, and injustice. Consequently, it is also the responsibly of the believer to bring the good news of Jesus Christ against the pain, problems and proclivities of others, which will cause them to "stand away" from what is plaguing them!

Jesus establishes the model by which believers should follow. When believers accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, they became Christians, and because they are Christians, they are followers of Christ. Furthermore, the text identifies Jesus' targeted audience, which is the poor, the broken-hearted, those in captivity, the blind, and the bound. Jesus is assigned to bring the good news to the poor, which identifies his

[21] Warren Baker, Eugene E. Carpenter, and Spiros Zodhiates, *Complete Word Study Bible Old and New Testaments* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG International, Inc., 1992), electronic Bible.

target audience. “Jesus the CHRIST was concerned with those in CRISIS...the least, the lost and the left behind, the disabled, the disadvantaged and the disenfranchised” (Matthew 25:40). Jesus was a liberator, and since he was a liberator, his followers are not only “called,” but they are anointed to be liberators as well. Moreover, in a big picture overview, Robert McAfee Brown highlights that liberation theology is about “the God of the poor,” “the view from below,” “good news to the poor,” “the third world,” “social structures as carriers of evil,” and “subversion.”[22]

In follow-up to the brief insight of Jesus’ job description, a deeper dive into liberation and being liberated reveals then that liberation theology is about people, as previously mentioned. Robert McAfee Brown notes that “the starting point for liberation theology is not all the topics theologians write about, but the here-and-now ness of what is happening on street corners or at soup kitchens or in the far-reaching decisions made by politicians and generals.”[23] Brown continues to highlight three important points necessary in liberation theology that are dependent, and even codependent upon each other, and cannot be separated. He explains that liberation theology is “liberation from unjust social structures that destroy people,” “liberation from the power of fate,” and “liberation from personal sin and guilt.”[24] As previously mentioned, liberation theology is about individual freedom, but from Brown’s perspective, it is also about freedom from systemic oppression and discrimination. Liberation theology is about breaking negative

[22] Brown, *Liberation Theology*, 89.

[23] Brown, *Liberation Theology*, 52.

[24] Brown, *Liberation Theology*, 61-63.

mindsets or generational curses that keep people in bondage, and it is the "reality of gratuitousness of grace."[25]

Biblically, the plight and power within liberation theology establish the promise of salvation, deliverance, and healing for the spirit and the soul. To many, this is very well-desired, needed, and would be promoted as a positive movement for those who are spiritually broken and in need of freedom for their soul. However, when one launches the plan and purpose of liberation theology beyond the salvific and spiritual purposes of God, and moves into mental, emotional, physical, financial, and or political empowerment, the positive perspective of liberation theology may take on a different view for some. This perspective of liberation theology may represent a sharing of resources, opportunities, and wealth, and as a consequence, those who have a history of privilege in these areas are occasionally unwilling to relinquish their comfort, convenience, safety, or security for others to have access to those opportunities who have been historically blocked from them. Therefore, liberation theology is an assignment for those with fortitude and resilience who desire to see a total change in the lives of individuals within their sphere of influence.

Consequently, Brown highlights "Four Reoccurring Themes" which have become associated with liberation theology in Latin America and have encouraged those to stay motivated in the plight of liberation. These four reoccurring themes include compromiso, hope, God's presence, and preferential option for the poor.[26] Brown also notes that while compromiso sounds like compromise, it really means "commitment," and regards itself

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[25] Brown, *Liberation Theology*, 61-63.

[26] Brown, *Liberation Theology*, 25-33.

as "putting your body, where your words are."[27] Brown highlights that hope is the driving force behind compromiso, in that the commitment of the whole person to a better future is hope; and this is the notion that change is possible, because hope signifies the concept that it is not God's will for the poor to remain poor.[28]

Brown continues to highlight the third reoccurring theme, which is God's presence. Here he highlights that the reason for the strong compromiso and deeply grounded hope is that the people recognize that they are not alone, but God is "in their midst," working with them, and calling on them to work with God.[29] In other words, this theme strongly signifies that God is on the side of the poor! As a consequence, one cannot see Jesus as just sitting up high, disconnected and unconcerned with those for whom he died; this approach is Christology from above, according to Brown.[30] However, because Jesus is the Liberator, Jesus is "in the midst" of those who are the least, the lost, and the left behind, and this approach is Christology from below.[31]

The final reoccurring theme that is the pinnacle of liberation theology, as highlighted by Brown, who takes on this perspective and philosophy from Gustavo Gutierrez, is a "preferential option for the poor." According to Brown, compromiso, hope, and God's presence all work together to create progress for social justice and the eradication of poverty through a preferential option for the poor. Brown explains that this is not an exclusive option for the poor, as though God loved only the poor and hated the

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[27] Brown, *Liberation Theology*, 26.

[28] Brown, *Liberation Theology*, 27-28.

[29] Brown, *Liberation Theology*, 29-31.

[30] Brown, *Liberation Theology*, 64.

[31] Brown, *Liberation Theology*, 64.

rich; but the Gospel "proclaims that God loves all people, not just some."[32] Brown continues to highlight, "that God loves all means that there must be food, shelter, jobs, and humane living conditions for all and not just some."[33] According to Brown, a preferential option for the poor "means that when there is an opportunity to make a policy, legislative decision, that those in power should make the decision that will bring about a consequent broadening of the degree of social justice in society."[34] In other words, if the decision, policy, rule, or regulation does not promote assistance or improvement of the quality of life for the poor, then the issue should be opposed. A preferential option for the poor intends to establish a protocol for believers and non-believers, faith-based organizations and Community-Based Organizations, not-for-profit organizations and for-profit organizations to close economic gaps within society and address the social injustices within communities as well as the world beyond.

Gutierrez provides additional insight into the preferential option for the poor, which includes an important responsibility of Christians and the church. He highlights that although there are multiple reasons why one should consider the poor such as the Love of God, he also notes that:

> This same perception was confirmed by the experience of the Christian communities of Latin America and reached Puebla via the document that the Peruvian bishops prepared for the CELAM meeting. Puebla asserted that simply because of God's love for them as manifested in Christ "the poor merit preferential attention, whatever may be the moral or personal situation in which they find themselves (no. 1142). In other words, the poor deserve preference not because they are morally or religiously better than others, but because God is God, in whose eyes "the last are first." This statement clashes with our narrow

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[32] Brown, *Liberation Theology*, 31-32.

[33] Brown, *Liberation Theology*, 32.

[34] Brown, *Liberation Theology*, 32.

> understanding of justice; this very preference reminds us, therefore, that God's ways are not ours (see Isa. 55: 8).[35]

As a consequence, the community, corporations, and even more importantly, the church must be engaged in policy, politics, and decision-making activities that change the trajectory of the lives of those affected by unjust practices, policies and laws!

Multiple liberation theologies that have been birthed since the Civil Rights Movement, and as a consequence, liberation theology has similarly become a movement, not a moment. For the purposes of this project, each of these liberation theologies will not be addressed in depth; however, some time will be spent presenting a historical backdrop and defining black liberation theology. This particular liberation theology was chosen because the author closely identifies with the ethnicity and culture and is directly engaged by many personal experiences.

Stacy M. Floyd-Thomas and Anthony B. Pinn, in their book *Liberation Theologies in the United States: An Introduction*, provide a very detailed overview of several liberation theologies worth mentioning at this time, before a brief overview of black liberation theology. First and foremost, according to Floyd-Thomas and Pinn, "Liberation theologies emerged in the late 20th century, concerned with the transformation of social existence (i.e., liberation) as a religious quest. They are contextual, tied to the experiences and needs of concrete communities. They are political in nature and religious in commitment."[36] As a consequence, the establishment and the development of individual, cultural, and intentional systemic theologies had to emerge,

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[35] Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, xxvii-xxviii.

[36] Stacy M. Floyd-Thomas and Anthony Pinn, *Liberation Theologies in the United States: An Introduction* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2010), 1.

because one social group's issue could not be addressed by a broad-brush theology or philosophy of another group. In this book, Floyd-Thomas and Pinn address the historical, contextual, theological, and political influence of Latina theology, Hispanic/Latino(a) theology, Asian American theology, Asian American feminist theology, Native feminist theology, American Indian theology, womanist theology, Feminist theology, gay and lesbian theologies, as well as black liberation theology.

In regard to black liberation theology, according to Floyd-Thomas and Pinn, it was James Cone's *Black Theology and Black Power* and *A Black Theology of Liberation* that set the initial tone for black liberation theology in the United States as a systematic theology.[37] Dwight N. Hopkins, in *Introducing Black Theology of Liberation*, notes that "a liberation movement needs to free black minds from self-hate and subordination to white power."[38] Therefore, black liberation theology, along with the black social gospel, has attempted to meet this goal.

> According to Hopkins, the development of black theology included four stages:
>
> 1) the historical context of slavery between (1619–1865), whereas enslaved Africans and African-Americans created a new faith called black religion for the oppressed and the poor;
>
> 2) a "unique way of reading and experiencing the Bible," where poor people related the theme of the Book of Exodus, the message of the prophets, and the life of Jesus as the way to liberty and freedom;
>
> 3) the "effort to relate the gospel to the experiences of the African American freedom struggle and the particular challenge of black power";

[37] Floyd-Thomas and Pinn, *Liberation Theologies in the United States*, 1.

[38] Dwight N. Hopkins, *Introducing Black Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1999), 5.

> 4) Finally, "method," which highlights "how conclusions about Jesus Christ are systematically related to the movement for liberation of and among the oppressed, especially the African American poor."[39]

However, modern black liberation theology was launched through the lens of the Civil Rights and Black Social Gospel Movements, similar to the initiation of liberation theology, which was launched through the lens of the Social Gospel Movement.

According to Gary Dorrien in *Breaking White Supremacy: Martin Luther King Jr. and the Black Social Gospel,* Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., is noted as being influenced by the black social gospel, which was not often mentioned or recognized as an important part of the social Christianity; however, without the black social gospel, "King would not have known what to say when history called."[40] Additionally, Dorrien notes that "King entered the ministry fully persuaded that Mays, Barbour, Johnson, and Thurman were viable models of a radical social gospel ministry—models for him personally, especially on economic justice."[41]

According to Dorrien, J. Deotis Roberts established the seed of black theology immediately after King was assassinated, which was around the same time as the rise of black consciousness and Stokely Carmicheal's "Black Power" Movement.[42] Consequently, according to Hopkins, a group of African-American clergy, who assembled in the name of the National Committee of Negro Churchmen (NCNC), launched the first stage of black theology on July 31, 1966, when they published a

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[39] Hopkins, *Introducing Black Theology of Liberation,* 15-16.

[40] Gary Dorrien, *Breaking White Supremacy: Martin Luther King Jr. and the Black Social Gospel* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018), 443.

[41] Dorrien, *Breaking White Supremacy*, 443.

[42] Dorrien, *Breaking White Supremacy*, 444.

"theological manifesto" that became the first attempt to relate the gospel of Jesus Christ to the black community's need for power.[43] After this publication, other publications followed such as the "Black Manifesto," authored by the National Black Economic Development Conference, in Detroit, Michigan, April 26, 1969, which called for whites who benefited from the oppression of blacks to provide funds in order to support the economic growth of black communities.[44] It was during this time that black clergy began establishing a theological response to injustices and initiated an elevated black consciousness through the lens of the Christian faith, and consequently, black theology was formally birthed.[45]

It was in March 1969 that James H. Cone released *Black Theology and Black Power*, which, according to Cone, was intended to "identify liberation as the heart of the Christian gospel and blackness as the primary mode of God's presence."[46] Dr. Cone has also released many other books defining and describing his thought on black liberation theology such as *A Black Theology of Liberation* and *The Cross and the Lynching Tree*. Though the full depth and breadth of Dr. Cone's perspective and philosophy on black liberation theology will not be exhausted in this project, there are a few areas worth highlighting in order to provide consideration points on the subject matter.

In Dr. Cone's *Black Theology and Black Power,* he notes the term "Black Power" was articulated by Stokely Carmichael in the spring of 1966, which became the black

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[43] Hopkins, *Introducing Black Theology of Liberation*, 7.

[44] Floyd-Thomas and Pinn, *Liberation Theologies in the United States*, 18.

[45] Floyd-Thomas and Pinn, *Liberation Theologies in the United States*, 18.

[46] James H. Cone, *Black Theology and Black Power* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1989), xxv.

response to white racism.[47] Cone explains and defines black power through the lens of Stokely Carmichael as "complete emancipation of black people from white oppression by whatever means black people deem necessary."[48] Additionally, Cone notes that black power, is "an attitude, an inward affirmation of the essential worth of blackness," as well as the freedom for the black man to own his blackness.[49] Cone also highlights that the black power is not black racism, but it "is an affirmation of the humanity of blacks in spite of white racism."[50]

This project has specifically addressed liberation theology and has introduced several systematic liberation theologies, each of which have their own role and purpose for their respective cultural groups or issues. However, according to Cone, the purpose of black liberation theology is "to apply the freeing power of the gospel to black people under white oppression," and as a consequence, black theology may be called a theology of revolution.[51] In summary, according to Cone:

> Black Theology believes that we are on the threshold of a new order—the order of a new black community. The Black Power movement is a transition in the black community from nonbeing to being. In the old order, black people were not allowed to be human; we were what white America permitted us to be—no-things. We took on false identities which destroyed our real selves, our beautiful black selves. The new order (partially realized now, but not fully consummated) is an order which affirms black self-identity.[52]

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[47] Cone, *Black Theology and Black Power*, 5.

[48] Cone, *Black Theology and Black Power*, 6.

[49] Cone, *Black Theology and Black Power*, 9.

[50] Cone, *Black Theology and Black Power*, 19.

[51] Cone, *Black Theology and Black Power*, 36.

[52] Cone, *Black Theology and Black Power*, 152.

In Cone's book *A Black Theology of Liberation: Fortieth Anniversary Edition*, he expresses the sentiment that the church is God's community on earth and should participate in Jesus' liberation work of breaking down the oppressive social structures that destroy people.[53] These sentiments are exciting because on Sunday morning, the church should not simply be an aquarium where attendance paints a perfect picture of what the Kingdom of God looks like, while no real work has been done in the Kingdom or the community to reflect the power of the God of the Kingdom. In this final chapter of the book, Cone highlights that the world is the place where people are "dehumanized;" therefore, the church cannot retreat from its calling to bring liberation to those affected by the world's system, and to do otherwise is denying the gospel.[54] Cone ends this chapter by revealing a profound insight of eschatology, wherein he notes that "Eschatology is related to action and change."[55] Through the lens of Jürgen Moltmann's "Theology of Hope," Cone highlights that eschatology has traditionally been relegated to the end times without any regard to the present; therefore, the church has accepted complacency in living frugally in the world today and being more focused on preparation for the future beyond.[56] However, highlighting Moltmann, Cone notes that "The future cannot be a perfection of the present. Therefore, 'To know God is to suffer God'—that is, to be called by God into the world, knowing that the present is incongruous with the expected

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[53] James H. Cone, *A Black Theology of Liberation: Fortieth Anniversary Edition* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2010).

[54] Cone, *A Black Theology of Liberation*, 140-141.

[55] Cone, *A Black Theology of Liberation*, 147.

[56] Cone, *A Black Theology of Liberation*, 147-148.

future."[57] As a consequence, according to Moltmann's "Theology of Hope," Cone highlights that "Hope must be related to the present, and it must serve as a means of transforming an oppressed community into a liberated—and liberating—community," and black liberation theology confirms it.[58]

It is then from liberation theology, philosophy, and perspective, that insights are gleaned on the responsibility of intentional collaboration. Hope is the church's responsibility; hope is the community's responsibility, and it is the responsibility of corporations. Hope is everyone's responsibility, because all are interconnected in this web of society in which all live. Even according to Hopkins, the influence of black liberation theology is not limited to black people.[59] The responsibility to meet the needs of and provide freedom and liberation to those sharing in this interconnectedness may have been launched through liberation theology, but it is not just the responsibility of those who are in relationship with God through the Chief Liberator, Jesus Christ; it is the responsibility of all in society. However, the church has to lead the way in bringing hope to those who are desolate, destitute, and disenfranchised. According to Floyd-Thomas and Pinn, "The message of liberation is the revelation of God as revealed in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. Freedom IS the gospel."[60]

In light of these insights of liberation theology and black liberation theology, there is still much to be gained and learned. Several major questions remain: Where does the church go from here? How does it move forward? How does it engage the oppressors

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[57] Cone, *A Black Theology of Liberation*, 148.

[58] Cone, *A Black Theology of Liberation*, 148.

[59] Hopkins, *Introducing Black Theology of Liberation*, 7.

[60] Floyd-Thomas and Pinn, *Liberation Theologies in the United States*, 20.

to relinquish some of their power, influence, and will to the oppressed? How does it move toward a society where "all things are common?" Through the lens of liberation theology, how does the church address economic inequalities and equity issues is this postmodern society? Theoretically, in what activities may it engage or what strategies may it incorporate through the lens of liberation theology that may foster intentional collaboration with entities in the community to address socioeconomic concerns that may improve the quality of life for individuals in the context?

The considerations and questions are unlimited. There is no way to fully exhaust or resolve all thoughts or considerations within this project; however, liberation theology provides the theological framework for the theoretical process necessary to address socioeconomic injustices and inequalities within society. Robert Brown does provide some insight into this "what's next?" question. He reveals that the task of liberation theology is to "(1) help us confront our own situation and seek to understand it, (2) help us put our own theological heritage and our situation into communication with one another, and (3) help us to move to actions that are appropriate to our attempts to relate the first two."[61] As a consequence, if the church is going become a change agent and transform the cultural norms in American society, it has to challenge the way things are seen. Brown notes that, in this instance, there is a three-prong approach in liberation theology to transforming the mindset of those in power, and those approaches simply include: Stop, Look, and Listen.[62]

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[61] Brown, *Liberation Theology*, 116.

[62] Brown, *Liberation Theology*, 91-101.

According to Brown, "Stop" requires people to slow down and evaluate where they are and how they can make a difference, which requires "confronting potential help" and "confronting actual challenge."[63] "Look" includes the responsibility for people to look around and see the poverty and oppression experienced by others in society as well as in other parts of the world.[64] The other responsibility of those who are intentional about creating social change is to "Listen." Brown notes that it is not enough to see, if one does not listen; when one does not listen, they accept a state of denial. As a consequence, Brown proclaims that they "are part of the problem rather than part of the solution."[65]

Brown's approach to executing liberation theology provides a very simple theoretical perspective to addressing social issues in society. However, an additional action that must be implemented in order to close the gap of this very simple approach is "Respond." Once a need has been identified, there is a responsibility to respond and address the situation. To see a need and not address it, is to oppress it, until the day that it overwhelmingly exceeds its capacity and explodes, leaving a residue of affliction and contaminating the environment in which it dwells. As a consequence, the affliction spreads beyond the one in need to the entire community, which is now stricken with the same disease of need that could have been addressed before it was oppressed. That is to say, the theoretical approach to liberation theology is to do what Jesus did: stop, look, listen, and use one's power and capacity to respond to needs within one's sphere of

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[63] Brown, *Liberation Theology*, 91.

[64] Brown, *Liberation Theology*, 91-98.

[65] Brown, *Liberation Theology*, 98-99.

influence. This theological framework supports the philosophy of Intentional Collaboration on addressing the social concerns in postmodern society.

Brown continues to highlight additional points for consideration provided by Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer under this "What's Next?" umbrella. Nelson-Pallymeyer's three recommended plans of action to address social concerns include:

> 1. We must consciously form communities of committed Christians, whereas we analyze, theologize, worship and act together to address the social ills in our communities,
>
> 2. As a people of faith, we must be willing to speak the truth to one another and to the dominant community, whereas the truth is necessary speak to one another and to the dominant culture in order to dispel lies and obtain the facts to address these situations, and finally,
>
> 3. We must take risks, which is a part of what is means to be an authentic Christian. Christians must take risks individual, which may include living a simple lifestyle, sharing of resources, committing to nonviolence or challenging the power structures.[66]

Additionally, Brown notes that risks must be taken on a communal level, which means as a collective people, choosing God over money. He highlights that taking risks has "gone with the territory of being an authentic Christian since about A.D. 30.[67]

Intentional collaboration from the inside out and from the outside in is necessary to produce the momentum to close the economic gaps within society. Liberation theology has a clear message and, surely, everyone will not embrace the total picture; but if the strategic positions and doors that God opens can be capitalized upon, then lives can be lived in a way that has to be respected by others, and what one stands for and who one represents will be embraced. Performing these assignments in Pharoah's court with love

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[66] Brown, *Liberation Theology*, 116-120.

[67] Brown, *Liberation Theology*, 116-120.

will allow the church to show “a more excellent way,” as the Apostle Paul revealed in First Corinthians 12:31.

To this end, much has been made of the responsibility of “Collaboration,” and even more so the responsibility of “Intentional” collaboration, which includes the partnership of churches, Community-Based Organizations, and corporations. However, there is one voice that must also be at the table of these discussions which has not been mentioned as yet: the poor themselves. Often, those in power have conversations and make decisions on behalf of powerless people, without including them in the conversation or the decision-making process. How can someone have a discussion on someone else’s behalf without their input? Gutierrez notes that “In the development of liberation theology our awareness of this new presence has made us aware that our partners in dialogue are the poor, those who are "nonpersons"—that is, those who are not considered to be human beings with full rights, beginning with the right to life and to freedom in various spheres.”[68]

In reflecting upon liberation theology and the responsibility of believers to address the needs of the poor, the broken, the least, and the left behind, there are multiple issues and concerns that beg for the attention of liberation theology such as gender, healthcare, and voting rights. However, the particular focus for this project is addressing the issues related to economic inequalities. Therefore, an additional discipline within liberation theology is required to further investigate a theological perspective of economic injustices. This theological thought is the “Theology of Economic Equality and

[68] Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, xxix.

Equity.” The intent behind this proposed systemic liberation theology is to focus on what the Bible says about economic disparities within society and how to address them.

CHAPTER FIVE

INTERDISCIPLINARY FOUNDATIONS

The interdisciplinary topic chosen for review that will intersect with intentional collaboration to close the equity gaps within disadvantaged communities is Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD). The biblical perspective of the new believer's having "all things common," Walter Rauschenbusch's historical philosophy of the "Social Gospel," and Gustavo Gutierrez's "Liberation Theology" each requires a connection with the people within their respective sphere of influence. Consequently, these people are those who are close in proximity. They are family members, husbands, wives, brothers, sisters, cousins, aunts, and uncles. These are individuals who are in despair and in need of hope. They are even people who regularly attend church. They are in the community. In order to bring healing, hope, and prosperity to the disenfranchised in communities, there has to be an avenue, a process, and a plan. The strategies outlined and defined within ABCD provide protocols that may be utilized to address the economic inequalities within the context, and they may bring a positive impact to the community.

The first question that must be addressed is, "What is Asset-Based Community Development?" According to Cormac Russell in *Asset-Based Community Development: Looking Back to Look Forward*, ABCD "describes what communities do when they come together to effectively make things better where they live, and what they use to do so,

despite the challenges they face."[1] Russell regards John McKnight and John Kretzmann as thought leaders in ABCD, as they have compiled stories of community relatedness that provide valuable insight to the functions on communities.[2] According to Kretzmann and McKnight in *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Asset*s, they note, "A thorough map of those assets would begin with an inventory of the gifts, skills and capacities of the community's residents."[3] Additionally, Fiona Garven, Jennifer McLean, and Lisa Pattoni in *Asset-Based Approaches: Their Rise, Role and Reality*, define asset-based approaches as "the common thread of supporting people through recognising, valuing and building strengths, skills and talents, without disregarding the structural, social and economic challenges or circumstances an individual may be confronted with."[4]

According to Kretzmann and McKnight, community development is the process of identifying and mobilizing local capacities and connecting people with those capacities with other people, associations, businesses, institutions, capital, and credit.[5] Russell explains that Kretzmann and McKnight brought clarity and articulation to the perspective and practice of asset-based community development through *Building Communities from the Inside Out* and other works.[6] More so, according to Russell, Kretzmann and

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[1] Cormac Russell, *Asset-Based Community Development: Looking Back to Look Forward* (Dublin, Ireland: Cormac Russell, 2015), location 123, e-book.

[2] Russell, *Asset-Based Community Development*, e-book.

[3] John Kretzmann and John McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets* (Chicago, IL: ACTA Publications, 1993), 6.

[4] Fiona Garven, Jennifer McLean, and Lisa Pattoni, *Asset-Based Approaches: Their Rise, Role and Reality* (London, UK: Dunedin Academic Press, 2017), 579, Kindle.

[5] Kretzmann and McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out*, 18.

[6] Russell, *Asset-Based Community Development*, e-book.

McKnight's work, along with that of their associates, established building blocks which became categorized as "community assets," that:

> Reflected the local residents down-to-earth, real-world accounts of their experiences in nurturing their health and wellbeing, protecting the environment and the local economy, raising happy children, aging actively and comfortably at home, responding to natural or man-made disasters, as well as being good stewards of local ecology and of deepening democracy, achieving social justice and nurturing local wisdom.[7]

Russell also describes that Kretzmann and McKnight's work with the ABCD Institute affirms "community assets" as the primary building blocks of sustainable community empowerment and development.[8]

Asset-based community development includes multiple options for determining the best way to implement and execute a process of exploring and identifying a community's asset. Again, solutions are sought that will address the social and economic injustices in society. Kretzmann and McKnight provide a very clear strategy and process to determine individual and institutional assets that can help change the trajectory of a community.

According to Kretzmann and McKnight, the more traditional path to resolving community concerns and issues is the needs-driven approach, which establishes problems and negative images and addresses them through deficiency-oriented policies and programs.[9] They continue to note that deficiency-oriented approaches constitute a needs map which has negative consequences for low income individuals and neighborhoods; and as a consequence, individuals and neighborhoods see themselves as negative,

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[7] Russell, *Asset-Based Community Development*, location 175, e-book.

[8] Russell, *Asset-Based Community Development*, e-book.

[9] Kretzmann and McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out*, 2.

victims, and incapable of taking control of their own lives.[10] Kretzmann and McKnight note that the traditional path of a needs-deficiency-driven approach, along with establishing a needs map, has a tendency to: view communities as an endless list of problems and needs; direct funding away from residents to service providers; have negative effects on the nature of local leadership; underline the perception that only outside experts can provide help; ensure a cycle of dependence; ensure a maintenance and survival strategy targeted at isolated individual clients, not a development plan that can involve the energies or an entire community; and only guarantee survival and not lead to serious change or community development.[11]

Based on Kretzmann and McKnight's evaluation of the traditional approach of determining needs, the ideology is that a different approach is needed. In dealing with disadvantaged individuals in communities with little tangible resources, there is a tendency for those individuals to feel like they do not have anything worth giving to help their situation. However, this perception could not be further from the truth. Individuals who have few resources does not mean that they have little worth, value, skill, or assets. The best source of addressing needs within a community is the individuals within the community, because those individuals have a vested interest within their community. More so, once individuals see jobs, businesses, and economic advancement, it will create the motivation that will fuel a sustainable change for continued investment by those individuals in their own environment.

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[10] Kretzmann and McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out*, 4.

[11] Kretzmann and McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out*, 4-5.

Although the context for this project is the local church, Urban Empowerment Ministries, the whole intent and purpose of the strategy behind individual empowerment and improvement is to ultimately bring a change in the individual that will impact their family, community, and church. Therefore, based on the research and strategy established by community development provocateurs like Kretzmann and McKnight, as well as others whose works will be highlighted further in this paper, ABCD provides the ability to not only address needs within a certain situation or scenario, but it also provides the necessary strategies to evaluate an individual's, as well as the community's and stakeholder's, strengths in order to address the equity issues within a situation. As a consequence, by determining the assets, skills, and strengths of individuals and communities, one is able to establish a connectedness between individuals and stakeholders in order to reduce economic inequalities, build economic empowerment, and change the quality of life of all those involved.

Therefore, as opposed to the traditional path, as previously mentioned, Kretzmann and McKnight established the "Alternative Path: Capacity-Focused Development" ABCD process, which "leads toward the development of polices and activities based on the capacities, skills and assets of lower income people and their neighborhoods."[12] According to Kretzmann and McKnight, a couple of important reasons for the alternative path approach are that significant community development takes place when local individuals make a personal investment in the effort, and the opportunity for outside help for the most part is limited.[13] As a consequence, true community development and

[12] Kretzmann and McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out*, 5.

[13] Kretzmann and McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out*, 5.

change happens when there is an understanding of the capacities, skills, and abilities, as well as a community connectedness or working togetherness in order to address the concerns and issues that destroy the community and diminish the quality of life of individuals in the community.

Kretzmann and McKnight's work has revealed an important process and strategy by which to evaluate and assess individual and community assets. However, one of the important points that Kretzmann and McKnight highlight before they move into the process of evaluation is the establishment of a new map, called a "Community Assets Map." As previously mentioned, when a community developer initiates a traditional approach to community development which is needs-driven, it leads the researchers to establish a "Neighborhood Needs Map." The traditional approach, which establishes a neighborhood needs map, suggests a list of problems, concerns, and issues that may lead to these items being addressed through deficiency-oriented policies and practices. However, according to Kretzmann and McKnight, when one uses the asset-based approach, this alternative path establishes a community assets map, which begins with establishing a list of gifts, skills, and capacities, then an inventory of less formal associations (in this project, these are considered to be CBOs and other public and private stakeholders); and as a consequence, these individuals, associations, and institutions collaborate collectively to form a local strength that can economically contribute to the well-being of all in society.[14]

Kretzmann and McKnight provide an understanding of the asset-based community development process, which is, in theory, both internally focused and

[14] Kretzmann and McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out*, 4-8.

relationship driven.[15] According to these authors, "internally focused" means that this process is "intended simply to stress the primacy of local definition, investment, creativity, hope and control," and they note that "relationship driven" requires the constant building and rebuilding of relationships between local residents, local associations, and local institutions.[16] Therefore, as hypothesized, in order to address the social and economic injustices within the community and society, there must be "intentional collaboration" between all those within the sphere of influence of the problem to close the equity gaps within society.

Based on the discussion up to this point, one may ascertain the two dominant sections within society that must be evaluated and accessed to initiate the data collection process. These groups, according to Kretzmann and McKnight's ABCD process, require the assessing and releasing of "individual" capacities and the power of local associations and organizations.[17] All of the intimate details of this strategy cannot be captured within the scope of this project; however, a general overview will be provided of the areas and categories that Kretzmann and McKnight suggest should be captured.

As one drills down into the details of compiling the skills, abilities and capacities of individuals, as well as associations and organizations, Kretzmann and McKnight call the process for collecting this information a "Capacity Inventory" development tool, which is established to help individuals participate in the process.[18] In regard to performing the capacity inventory for individuals, these provocateurs suggest the

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[15] Kretzmann and McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out*, 8-10.

[16] Kretzmann and McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out*, 9.

[17] Kretzmann and McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out*, 13-15.

[18] Kretzmann and McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out*, 14-17.

collection of information in four parts, which include skills, community, enterprising interest and experience, and personal. Part one, Skills Information, may include the collection of information on an individual's health, office, construction and repair, maintenance, food, child care, transportation, operating equipment and repairing machinery, supervision, sales, music, security, other, and priority skills.[19] Part two, Community Skills, may include work with CBOs or associations in which the individual may have participated and is willing to participate in the future.[20] Part three, Enterprising Interests and Experience, may include an individual's future business interests or current business activities. Finally, part four, Personal, may include the volunteering of an individual's personal contact information for future follow-up and connection with the individual surveyed.[21]

The second group that must be surveyed to compile, assess, and evaluate, in order to release their power to engage and provide a wholistic community connectedness, includes local associations and organizations. Kretzmann and McKnight note that an association is a group of citizens serving together for a common vision and goal, which may include a plethora of neighborhood associations such as artistic organizations, business organizations, charitable and church groups, civic and support groups, elderly groups, ethnic associations, health and fitness groups, interest clubs, local media, men's groups, outdoor groups, political organizations, school groups, service clubs, social groups, sports leagues, study groups, veteran groups, women groups, and youth groups.[22]

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[19] Kretzmann and McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out*, 14-24.

[20] Kretzmann and McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out*, 15.

[21] Kretzmann and McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out*, 16.

[22] Kretzmann and McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out*, 109-110.

As a list of these groups are compiled and identified, Kretzmann and McKnight's ABCD process requires an inventory of the assets of these associations and organizations, in order to ensure that the power and work performed by these entities is shared and engaged in addressing the issues in the community. It is suggested that when individuals and these entities are working together and intentionally collaborating, there is no issue that cannot be addressed and resolved in communities.

There are several other areas that Kretzmann and McKnight address as playing an important role in addressing community issues. These authors highlight the necessity to capture and assess "Local Institutions for Community Building", as well as locating entities for "Rebuilding the Community Economy." According the Kretzmann and McKnight, institutions include public, private, and not-for-profit institutions, which may include parks and public institutions such as libraries, schools, community colleges, police stations, and hospitals.[23] In order to obtain relevant information from these institutions, the inventory must include an evaluation of the these entities' personnel, space and facilities, materials and equipment, expertise, and economic power.[24]

The final evaluation identified by Kretzmann and McKnight includes connecting with entities that have the economic fortitude to financially impact the local communities. In the section entitled "Rebuilding the Community Economy," Kretzmann and McKnight detail the role of local institutions in relationship to investing in the neighborhood economy, which must include local purchasing, hiring, creating new businesses, developing human productive capacity and physical resources, investing financial

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[23] Kretzmann and McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out*, 171-182.

[24] Kretzmann and McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out*, 171-261.

resources, mobilizing external resources, and creating alternative credit institutions.[25] Each of these responsibilities assists with strengthening the local economy, and if planned intentionally, may provide the financial stability for individuals changing the trajectory of an entire society.

In addition to Kretzmann and McKnight, Gerardus Blokdyk, with the Art of Service, provides a very well-defined process of "Self Assessment" for marketers, entrepreneurs, managers, or consultants. According to Blokdyk in *Asset Based Community Development: Practical Tools for Self Assessment,* he proposes that to gain the ability to analyze and solve problems such as disparity gaps, one must be capable of asking the right questions.[26] Consequently, Blokdyk's book provides very descriptive processes in order to accrue information from a variety of standpoints. Blokdyk's ABCD process entails a "Self-Assessment" questionnaire, which includes a seven-criterion scoring system.[27]

According to Blokdyk, the seven-criterion scoring system includes the responsibility to: 1. Recognize, which is to "Be aware of the need for change"; 2. Define, which is to "Define the problem, needs and objectives"; 3. Measure, which is to gather the correct data and "Measure the current performance and evolution of the situation"; 4. Analyze, which is to "Analyze causes, assumptions and hypotheses"; 5. Improve, which is to "Develop a practical solution. Innovate, establish and test the solution and to measure the results"; 6. Control, which is to "Implement the practical solution. Maintain

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[25] Kretzmann and McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out*, 279.

[26] Gerardus Blokdyk, *Asset Based Community Development: Practical Tools for Self Assessment,* 2nd ed. (Brendale, Australia: The Art of Service, 2018), Kindle.

[27] Blokdyk, *Asset Based Community Development,* Kindle.

the performance and correct possible complications"; and 7. Sustain, which is to "Retain the benefits."[28] Each of Blokdyk's criteria includes respective questions which allow specific self-assessment results in order to close identified gaps and improve upon a specific situation. This project will not follow Blokdyk's model in detail; however, theoretically, principles of Blokdyk's philosophy will be utilized.

There are numerous barriers to fostering a collaborative community. A collaborative community is a community including individuals, CBOs, associations, and entities, who are partners in unity for a common purpose and goal, who also embrace the philosophy of togetherness and connectedness. One of the main barriers to the idea of "Intentional Collaboration" is capitalism. Of course, every for-profit business is in business to survive, thrive, and make enough money to be successful. However, there is a point where some industries and institutions move into an area of greed, whereas their decisions are more focused on making profit than serving their customers. Jesus taught the disciples in Luke 16:13, that "No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

Society is interdependent; therefore, every industry and institution are dependent upon each other. As a consequence, each corporation should include a communal perspective and, therefore, should develop policies and practices that are altruistic in nature, in order to be a partner and not only take away from the community, but give back. There are also a number of ways in which these institutions may give back. Several ways may be ensuring an ethnic diverse workforce, contracting with local firms and

[28] Blokdyk, *Asset Based Community Development*, Kindle.

business, and partnering with local associations to train, educate, and inform the local disadvantaged communities about opportunities with the organization.

Peter Block, Walter Brueggemann, and John McKnight in *An Other Kingdom: Departing the Consumer Culture*, eloquently address the issue of consumerism and communal philosophy. In this book, they highlight "Free Market Consumerism," where "Free means that there should be few constraints on individuals and institutions;" "Market means that how we conduct commerce is a first priority;" and "Consumer means that our capacity to purchase is the measure of our well-being and our identity."[29] As a consequence, the current postmodern day context is saturated with the ideology of free market consumerism. Block, Brueggemann, and McKnight continue to note, "This narrative is the lens through which we raise our children, tell the news, create our livelihood, label who is in and out, distribute empire, and define how we live. It identifies what really matters in the end and establishes the nature of our social relationships."[30]

As a consequence, the least, the lost, and the left out who are not connected within this area of society, are left behind because they do not have the relationship with those who are already connected in the system. This narrative is the impetus of systematic discrimination that establishes the economic inequalities and injustices in our neighborhoods and communities. Therefore, Block, Brueggemann, and McKnight reveal that this consumer and market authority hinders neighborhood relationships by structuring social power according to money and its constituents, which include

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[29] Peter Block, Walter Brueggemann, and John McKnight, *An Other Kingdom: Departing the Consumer Culture* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Son, Inc., 2016), xiii.

[30] Block, Brueggemann, and McKnight, *An Other Kingdom*, xiii.

"privilege, competition, self-interest, entitlement, surplus."[31] As a result, the communal perspective is lost and capitalism becomes the foremost endeavor of industry and society without consideration of the loss or cost. Consequently, Block, Brueggemann, and McKnight reveal that "The free market consumer ideology has produced a social disorder; people are no longer embedded in a culture that serves the common wealth, the common good."[32]

According to Block, Brueggemann, and McKnight, the free market consumer ideology is sustained by the following pillars: Scarcity, which is the "belief that no matter how much we have, it is not enough"; Certainty, which is the "limitless possibility of development and growth"; Perfection, which means that "failure is not an option"; and Privatization, which is the ideology that not-for-profits and government should run like a business.[33] As we can see, these pillars of the free market consumer ideology consciously or unconsciously, perpetuate an seclusive way of operating and exclude those who do not have access or power to participate in this level of doing business.

However, Block, Brueggemann, and McKnight discuss the "The Neighborly Covenant," which is an alternative to the free market consumer ideology.[34] They state that "The neighborly Covenant rests on beliefs in Abundance, Mystery, Fallibility, and the Common Good. It places faith in our communal capacity versus our consumer capacity."[35] According to Block, Brueggemann, and McKnight, abundance is the belief

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[31] Block, Brueggemann, and McKnight, *An Other Kingdom*, xiii-xvii.

[32] Block, Brueggemann, and McKnight, *An Other Kingdom*, xvii.

[33] Block, Brueggemann, and McKnight, *An Other Kingdom*, xvii-3.

[34] Block, Brueggemann, and McKnight, *An Other Kingdom*, xvii.

[35] Block, Brueggemann, and McKnight, *An Other Kingdom*, 7.

that we have enough and there is no need to identify with progress as the means to the "good life;" mystery is a combination of fidelity and freedom, which evokes the presence of God, where a vow is constituted and justice is implemented; fallibility accepts the reality that there are limits to growth; and the common good says that the efforts to bring restoration to land, air, water, the environment, and other resources must be placed in the hands of public trust.[36] Consequently, in theory, the benefit of public cooperation is seen not only with economic conditions, but also in environmental situations, where the general public's natural quality of life could be affected by the decisions of a few.

More so, it is ascertained, even theologically, from Block, Brueggemann, and McKnight's argument that it is not the love of money that allows society to thrive and survive, but it is the love of God that positions society to ultimately win. In order for there to be community, Block, Brueggemann, and McKnight highlight another very important perspective in regard to The Neighborhood Covenant, which is that there is an inherent anticipation of togetherness all around us, and as a consequence, "our yearning for community is not something we invented; it is innate, a given."[37] Therefore, the ideology of community, togetherness, and neighborliness is divinely orchestrated by God, and any other order is disorder according the spiritual nature of God. The "all things common" and communal perspective is God's way of serving the needs of all people, and the people all have a responsibility to play on the same sheet of music and in the same timing and key of the great orchestrator.

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[36] Block, Brueggemann, and McKnight, *An Other Kingdom*, 7-18.

[37] Block, Brueggemann, and McKnight, *An Other Kingdom*, 10.

As a result of becoming communal, John McKnight and Peter Block, in *The Abundant Community: Awakening the Power of Families and Neighborhoods*, provide a relevant point worth mentioning at this juncture regarding the difference between a competent community and a consumer-based community. McKnight and Block highlight that a competent community is "one that takes advantage of its abundance, admits the realities of the human condition and the truth of the decay, restoration, and growth processes that are a part of every living system"; whereas, a consumer based community is where a "consumer society breeds individualism and its effects of entitlement and self-interest, an abundant community is marked by a collective accountability that can be created only in relationship to other people."[38] As a consequence, the abundant community flourishes with capacities such as kindness, generosity, forgiveness, and cooperation, which allows for healthy interaction and livable communities.[39]

To establish an altruistic society, community, and church, where everyone's needs are meet and people are interdependent upon each other for survival and abundance, there must be a paradigm shift in everyone's way of life. Selfish capitalism as well as the free market consumer ideology can both be detrimental to community building, and unless industry stakeholders are willing to sacrifice immediate gratification of making a profit and meeting the bottom line, then intentional collaboration may be jeopardized. This shift in nature and culture will generate a new context by which people live, work, and play. It is a perspective where livelihoods must not be predominately "capitalistic" centered and financially focused on meeting the bottom line and making a profit. With this current

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[38] John McKnight and Peter Block, *The Abundant Community: Awakening the Power of Families and Neighborhoods* (San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 2010), 65.

[39] McKnight and Block, *The Abundant Community*, 67.

paradigm, money makes the world go around, but it is people, communal covenant, and relationships that should facilitate the societal success. Therefore, community should become the new currency!

If community is the new currency, then people consider their neighbor, brother, sister, and or friend, even in their lacking and downtrodden state. Injustices will be eradicated, violence will not be tolerated, and sharing will be appreciated, because people are building a neighborhood, society, and community where everyone survives. As a result, people are headed toward a society where all things are common, and everyone has their needs met.

As this chapter ends, the general concept of this project embraces Paul Schmitz's philosophy that in order to reach a common goal in addressing community issues, everyone in the community has to be a leader. In *Everyone Leads: Building Leadership from the Community Up*, Schmitz clearly details that the time has come in this current day where people cannot depend on the leadership of one person, but everyone in the community has the responsibility to be a leader. In this book, Schmitz identifies five leadership values that must be present in order to address community concerns. Those five values include recognizing and mobilizing community assets, connecting across cultures, facilitating collaborative action, continuously learning and improving, and being accountable.[40] Consequently, this notion crystalizes the concept of "Community is the New Currency," which takes "Intentional Collaboration" and creating the "Cycle of Salvation," where everyone has a role and responsibility in addressing community issues.

[40] Paul Schmitz, *Everyone Leads: Building Leadership from the Community Up* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass A. Wiley, 2012), 89.

If society is going to address poverty, discrimination, violence, injustice, and inequality, everyone must lead, and everyone can lead.

Based upon this chapter's evaluation of ABCD, the theoretical approach, as mentioned by Blokdyk, is to establish a specific set of questions in order to analyze everyone who has a stake in the game. Individuals, churches, CBOs, and corporations must all be evaluated to determine their assets. It is within this perspective that each stakeholder must be engaged and positioned to lead in addressing inequities and injustices. As previously mentioned, the responsibility of the ABCD approach is not to identify a set of needs, which results in a host of deficiencies, but to identify assets, which establishes benefits, skills, and resources that individuals and groups bring to the table in order to bring resolutions to whatever gaps there may be in a given situation.

Additionally, John McKnight mentions the importance of the church's involvement in these activities. In his book *The Careless Society: Community and Its Counterfeits*, he highlights that due to the extenuating circumstances around the change in family dynamics within urban communities, where second and third generations have relaxed their commitment to their neighborhoods, organizers have had to depend on local churches for their connections to the community.[41] Therefore, several individuals from the church context, Urban Empowerment Ministries, will be selected to participate in the project. The individuals selected will be analyzed to identify their assets, skills, education, talents, and gifts. Additionally, these individual's financial and or socio-economic status will be assessed in order to establish a benchmark of their personal net

[41] John McKnight, *The Careless Society: Community and Its Counterfeits* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1995).

worth. As a consequence, at the conclusion of the project, there may be improvement in the individual's financial quality of life.

Another assessment will entail questions for church leadership. A few individuals in the context will be selected to assist with assessing the resources and skills that the church has to offer in order to prepare individuals for employment. The church is an intricate part of the process, not only by selecting and bringing potential individuals to the workforce, but it is also important for spiritual, emotional, and mental support to prepare these individuals for employment and their future. Additionally, the church is responsible for assistance with retention efforts to encourage individuals to stay connected with the opportunities afforded. Therefore, the assessment for the church is to identify the tools and resources available to assist with recruitment and retention.

The assessment will also evaluate CBOs and corporations to ensure that they provide the right tools for hiring, training, and retaining socially and economically disadvantaged individuals. It is the discovery of the resources of each entity that will successfully fulfill the proposal of this project. Additionally, it is the hope that through the collaborative lens of these assessments, resources not commonly used or shared by these entities may be identified for the purposes of intentionally assisting individuals to foster a better quality of life.

It is this author's hope that the latter part of this research will morph into a theology and philosophy of strategy and practices that generate a collaborative transformation, which may lead to sustainable communities and neighborhoods. It is each individual's responsibility to be a leader and change the narrative of the current community context by implementing actions that create a social change. In order to

change the narrative and generate change, the language of covenant and neighborliness must be applied to the challenges of raising children, becoming healthy, and creating an economy that works for all. It includes a shift in language and narrative. It continues with actions that may be simple but intentional.

As a consequence, the simplest way in which to assess the change or progress as a result of intentional collaboration is to evaluate individual impact. Based on the scope and time limits of the project, this is the way in which the success of the collaboration will be evaluated. However, the results of intentional collaboration should be further investigated through the lens of what Norman Walzer and Liz Weaver call "Collective Impact." In their book *Using Collective Impact to Bring About Community Change*, they explain that in order to bring about a long-term systematic change for complicated concerns that may impact an entire community and involve multiple entities, measuring collective impact, as opposed to just evaluating an isolated "individual" impact is a necessity.[42] Additionally, according to Walzer and Weaver, measuring collective impact may motivate entities to change conflicting goals and strategies to reach a greater community good.[43] Due to the detailed evaluation of the project's "individual" impact, which is highlighted in the Project Analysis chapter, the author did not include a collective impact section; however, a collective impact section is suggested for future similar studies.

Finally, in conclusion, the ultimate goal with this project is beyond the scope of determining the intricate principles and precepts necessary to increase the quality of life

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[42] Norman Walzer and Liz Weaver, *Using Collective Impact to Bring About Community Change* (New York, NY: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2018), 1.

[43] Walzer and Weaver, *Using Collective Impact to Bring About Community Change*, 1.

for disadvantaged individuals in the context of Urban Empowerment Ministries. Through the lens of ABCD, the existential purpose of this study is to identify essential tools, including "non-violent" activities to behold Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "Beloved Community."[44] As a consequence, through creating a better quality of life for all individuals in communities, not only can the "utopia" of community development be established, but also the "Beloved Community."

[44] Martin Luther King Jr., *Stride Toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1958), 102.

CHAPTER SIX

PROJECT ANALYSIS

As we transition to the project analysis, the project's theme is "A Collaboration Model that Enhances the Social Equity of Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Individuals at Urban Empowerment Ministries." I intend to address this concern through educational workshops, life/social skills sessions and facilitating intentional collaboration meetings with CBOs for supportive services and corporations for employment. Specifically, the purpose of this qualitative narrative research project is to determine if prophetic leadership may provide spiritual empowerment to individuals through awareness and foster collaboration between the church, CBOs, and corporations to close social equity gaps of members at Urban Empowerment Ministries resulting in a better quality of life.

The target age of the participants for the project is between eighteen through forty-five; however, as you will see in this chapter there were several participants over the age of forty-five, and one participant over the age of sixty-five. As previously mentioned, all of the participants meet the United States Department of Transportation's definition of being socially and economically disadvantaged, which "presumes certain groups are disadvantaged, including women, Black Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, Asian-Pacific Americans, Subcontinent Asian-Pacific Americans, or other minorities found to be disadvantaged by the U.S. Small Business Administration

(SBA)."[1] Additionally, we considered participants who fell below the poverty line, according to the United States Department of Health and Human Services.[2] Since all of the participants met one or both definitions, we selected all of the individuals, who signed-up to participate in the project.

There is an evident disparity in relationship to everything connected to people who are socially and economically disadvantaged, such as in economics, education and employment. People who are educated and affluent, have access to better neighborhoods, better schools and their churches have more adequate resources to provide greater services to their parishioners. However, if you live in an area that was mostly socially and economically disadvantaged, then your schools have fewer resources, your community is not as vibrant; and your places of worship may only produce a certain level of service to its membership. Therefore, this project intends to provide actionable steps for churches, communities, corporations and government to implement in order to address systemic discrimination and advance economic development in socio-economic disadvantaged communities. I suggest that churches, Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), and corporations can collaborate to address social justice, criminal justice, economic justice and racial justice concerns, and as a consequence, bring about "social change" and a positive impact upon the social equity and economic stability of the society in which we live.

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[1] "Eligibility Guidelines (Overview)," Transportation.gov, accessed December 26, 2019, https://www.transportation.gov/civil-rights/disadvantaged-business-enterprise/eligibility.

[2] "HHS Poverty Guidelines for 2019," ASPE.hhs.gov, accessed December 26, 2019, https://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty-guidelines.

I intend to reveal how collaboration between churches, CBOs, and corporations may address social justice concerns in education, employment, and entrepreneurship, and as a consequence, close social inequalities within disadvantaged communities. The general question that I have is: How can churches, communities, and corporations work together to decrease poverty and increase the quality of life for socially and economically disadvantaged individuals and communities? I propose that through leadership, it is possible for churches to perform outreach in communities in which they serve to prepare individuals spiritually, socially, and mentally for employment with corporations and organizations within their communities.

If these entities intentionally collaborate and work together, I suggest that it is possible to create a "Cycle of Salvation," as highlighted in the biblical foundations chapter of this research, leading to a "Cycle of Success." This collaboration is intended to bring awareness of information and resources for individuals to access opportunities in education and employment that will address social inequities in disadvantaged communities. As a person becomes informed and gainfully employed, these competencies should increase self-worth and personal value, and as a consequence, the cycle of salvation establishes a positive testimony for others and diminishes the roads that lead to poverty and violence within these communities and abroad.

The biblical foundation of my project is rooted in Acts of the Apostles 2:42-47. The focal point of my thoughts within this pericope is "all things common," located in verse forty-four. The early church perspective of unity, togetherness, sharing, and equity ensured that all individuals in this community of new believers had "all things common," resulting in everything they needed, both naturally and spiritually. Therefore, if this

collective unity is workable for the early church, then this should also be essential for our communities today.

It is difficult to navigate within the subject of social injustice and inequalities through the lens of Christianity, without coming into contact with the perspective of the "Social Gospel." Walter Rauschenbusch's "Social Gospel" embodied his connection with the pain of poverty, injustice and inequities, and as a consequence, he challenged the social structures of his time, and raised awareness of the need for social change.

Liberation theology with an emphasis on Black Liberation Theology is the appropriate systematic theology that establishes theoretical processes in order to address the social concerns within my context. Jesus was and is our chief liberator, and as Christians, since we are to be followers of Christ, we are to do as Jesus did! As a consequence, I believe that liberation theology provides the theological framework for the theoretical process necessary to address socioeconomic injustices and inequalities within our society. Liberation theologian, Robert McAfee Brown notes that there is a three-pronged approach in liberation theology to transforming the mindset of those in power, and those approaches simply include stop, look, and listen.[3] As mentioned in the theological foundations, I suggest an additional action that must be implemented in order to close the gap of this very simple approach, which is "respond." Responding to the issues that have plagued individuals and communities for years is the responsibility of everyone in the community. This project hopes to create a strategy that may be utilized to address barriers to liberating means.

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[3] Robert McAfee Brown, *Liberation Theology: An Introductory Guide* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), 91-101.

The interdisciplinary topic that intersects with intentional collaboration to close the equity gaps within disadvantaged communities, is Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD). As mentioned, this ABCD approach will be utilized to assess individuals, the church, CBOs, and corporations in order to identify assets, skills, education, talents, gifts, tools, and resources available to assist with recruitment and retention to improve an individual's quality of life and close the equity gaps within our sphere of influence. I suggest that "Community is the New Currency," which takes "Intentional Collaboration" and creates a "Cycle of Salvation," or a "Cycle of Success," where everyone has a role and responsibility in addressing community issues.

Therefore, in order to create this change within the context of Urban Empowerment Ministries, I have selected several context associates to assist with this project. These individuals are great administrators, teachers, and have a personal interest in social justice concerns. These context associates will assist with assessing the resources and skills that the church has to offer in order to inspire and prepare individuals for employment. The context associates will be an intricate part of selecting individuals to participate in the project, but they will share in the spiritual, emotional, and mental support to prepare these individuals for employment and their future, as well. These associates are engaged in the community and have community connections of their own; therefore, these individuals will also be utilized to help identify CBOs and corporations to participate in the project. Additionally, the context associates will assist with awareness and retention efforts to encourage individuals to stay connected with their newly found connections. As recommended by the ABCD approach, the context associates will

participate in the project, as well as in the capacity inventory in order to evaluate their assets, skills, education, talents and gifts in which they bring to the process and project.

The context associates are Shannon Wilson, D'Andre Thompson and Whittley Jones. Shannon holds a Juris Doctorate, works for a corporate technology firm, and has led our church's Power Players Ministry, which focuses on encouraging employment, education and entrepreneurism with the members. D'Andre holds Master of Business Administration, works in finance in higher education, writes a blog in the local paper and has an interest in community service. Finally, Whittley holds a Master of Business Administration and has worked in corporate industry, as well as for non-profit organizations, and she has led a very successful community youth program. These context associates worked together to perform numerous important roles in the project, such as brainstorming the project strategy, assisting the participants through the pre- and post-surveys and maintaining constant communication with participants, as well as teaching (Appendix A).

The final project analysis will be through triangulation evaluation of the "social equity" gained by the participants through a review of the pre and post-surveys. This review will include, 1) an assessment the awareness gained by participants based upon the information gained during the workshops and life/social skill sessions and the information shared during the supportive services sessions, 2) an evaluation of the change or progress of the wholistic economic/financial impact of the participants surveyed from the beginning of the project to the conclusion, and 3) an anecdotal analysis of the value added to the participants by the relationships formed during the project. The intent is to critique if the participants gained greater awareness of opportunities and resources, as

well as increased employment, and if the employment advanced the financial equity of the participants.

As previously mentioned, pre and post-surveys will analyze each to these areas in order to validate the hypothesis of this study. At the end of the project, the financial status of the participants will be assessed and compared to the initial financial benchmark taken during the intake process. This will be an important factor in the evaluation, because employment, retention and financial impact should be the by-product of the motivation, education and awareness provided to the participants to encourage their participation in society. Once an individual experiences the potential to be gainfully employed, it is my hope that this positive experience, along with the community support system, will change the trajectory in the spiritual, mental, and financial life of these individuals.

During the "Final Close-Out Session," the participants, the context associates, the CBOs and the corporation staff may participate in additional questions to observe strengths and weaknesses in regard to how the collaboration process worked. These questions and an analysis of these strengths and weaknesses will be compiled and evaluated to determine the success of the project and to develop a list of "Best Practices." The best practices are essential, because it is my hope that the project's methodology and strategies become transferable to other communities in order to create similar programs to impact the lives of disadvantaged individuals. The whole intent and purpose of the strategy behind individual awareness, intentional collaboration and empowerment is to ultimately bring a change in the individual that will impact their family, community, and church. As a consequence, at the conclusion of the project, there may be an improvement in the participant's social and financial quality of life.

Methodology

The overall methodology for the ten-week collaboration project is broken into several phases, which includes 1). The Pre-work Phase; 2). Phase I "Kick-Off" Meetings and Pre-Surveys; 3). Phase II Workshops; 4). Phase III Life/Social Skills and Supportive Services; 5). Phase IV Corporation Presentations; 6). Phase V Follow-up and Networking; and 7). The Final Close Out Session and Post-Surveys. Each of these phases will be explained and defined in detail throughout the remainder of this document.

The pre-work phase of the collaboration project methodology includes the initial context associates meeting in order to provide an overview of the project and to explain the project schedule. During this meeting, we discussed the immediate project needs, the next steps for project preparation, and assigned various task for each associate. This meeting and several subsequent meetings, which took place before the official project launch, initiated the project's "pre-work" responsibilities. Pre-work responsibilities included drafting and sending invitation letters to the community-based organizations and corporations, reserving the meeting location, and preparing the project materials for the "kick-off" session.

The pre-work phase of the collaboration project methodology also included the project announcement which took place during church services to gain the interest of individuals who may be interested in participating in the project. After several weeks of announcing the project on Sundays and Wednesdays, the project was ready to launch with Phase I of the project, which includes the "Collaboration Kick-Off" Meetings and

Pre-Surveys. The "Kick-Off" meetings included the official project launch, introductions, project overview, and most importantly, the pre-survey for the participants.

The next step in the project was Phase II, which included four "self-improvement" workshops. In order to create the platform necessary to bring the participants and the partners together to create these opportunities, the strategy included a period of motivation and inspiration before collaboration. As a consequence, the workshops were designed to invoke spiritual encouragement to the participants through motivation and inspiration by teaching on the following topics "Finding Your Purpose," "Writing Your Vision," "Finishing What You Start," and "Living to Leave a Legacy." The core curriculum for these workshops came from Rick Warren's book, *The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth am I here For?*[4] This book was a New York Times Bestseller and has impacted the lives of many people. We thought that using some nuggets from this book blended with biblical text, as well as, my own thought and perspective would provide the encouragement necessary to retain the interest of the participants. Through these targeted teachings, the participants develop a level of personal motivation to encourage them to identify their purpose, fulfill their dreams, and work hard to develop a productive life, not only for themselves, but for their families and people who depend upon them. The details of the workshops will be described during the implementation section of this chapter.

Phase III of the collaboration project methodology entails the life/social skills training and supportive services presentations. Based upon the results of the participant pre-surveys, there are a number of life skills, social skills and or technical skills that we

[4] Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth am I Here For?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012).

thought necessary to support individuals for their next level of living. During this project, the context associates and I decided that communication and interpersonal skills, emotional intelligence, problem solving and critical thinking, as well as general social skills were essential for an individual's success. Additionally, Phase III included "Supportive Services and Informational Resources" presentations from CBO that would be helpful to bring awareness to the participants of the numerous community resources available to assist with other services, such as financial literacy, as well as interview skills and resume support. It is through the identification of these skills and the collaborative effort that the CBO will release their power to engage and provide individual support and wholistic community connectedness. The CBOs identified for this project includes, Love, Inc., the Heart of Missouri United Way, Job Point, United Community Builders, the City of Columbia-Supplier Diversity Program Development and MOSourceLink.

Phase IV of the project included corporation presentations, where local employers attend one of two sessions in order to provide the participants a general overview of their organization, how to locate available opportunities and walk through their application process. Based upon my professional experience, many times individuals may have a general career choice idea, but do not have intimate knowledge of local employers who may employ these opportunities. In other words, sometimes corporations are only viewed by their technical specialty, such as construction, manufacturing or transportation, and there is no consideration of other supportive roles available within those organizations, such as office support or accounting, which might be one's area of interest. Additionally, in accordance with the ABCD approach, employers are asked a number of questions to

determine their assets and strengths which may assist with recruitment and retention. The employer questions will be presented in the implementation section of this chapter.

After the employer presentations, Phase V of the collaboration project methodology includes participants network and follow-up with any of the CBOs or corporations in which they have been introduced. The participants had three weeks to utilize their newly found skills and make connections with the resources or employers in which they had come in contact with, during the employer presentations. The hope is that the participants will research employer's website, submit applications and maybe have interviews during this timeframe. Additionally, during this phase, the context associates and I will remain in constant contact with participants to provide inspiration, motivation and share additional employer activities, such as job fairs, that were occurring in the community.

The last activity of the methodology was the final close out session, which included participant post-surveys. The final close out session was held on the last day of the ten-week project. The participants, CBOs and corporations were all invited to attend this final session. In this final session the participants provided testimonials, received "certificates of completion," and they took the "post-survey." The CBOs and corporations also received an electronic questionnaire to capture their final thoughts on the project, as well. The details of the questionnaire will be presented in the implementation section of this chapter.

Implementation

As we move into the implementation section of this chapter, the following project schedule and timeline provides an overview of how the project was implemented, once the project proposal was approved by the Human Subjects Research Board on July 22, 2019. Additionally, following the project timeline is Figure 6.1., the Project Implementation Flowchart, which shows how the project timeline creates the "Cycle of Success" model, which can easily be utilized as a template for other entities.

The Pre-Work Phase

Pre-Work Phase	Context Associates Meeting	Tuesday, July 23, 2019
Pre-Work Phase	Project Preparation Activities	July 23-August 26, 2019
Pre-Work Phase	Project Church Announcements	Sunday, August 4, 2019 Wednesday, August 7, 2019 Sunday, August 11, 2019 Wednesday, August 14, 2019 Sunday, August 18, 2019 Wednesday, August 21, 2019 Sunday, August 25, 2019

Phase I

Kick-Off Meeting (Option 1)	Introductions, Project Overview and Participant Pre-Surveys	Tuesday, August 27, 2019
Kick-Off Meeting (Option 2)	Introductions, Project Overview and Participant Pre-Surveys	Thursday, August 29, 2019

Phase II

Workshop Session I	Finding Your Purpose	Tuesday, September 3, 2019
Workshop Session II	Writing Your Vision	Thursday, September 5, 2019
Workshop Session III	Finishing What You Started	Tuesday, September 10, 2019
Workshop Session IV	Leaving a Legacy	Thursday, September 12, 2019

Phase III

Life Skills Session I and CBO Supportive Services Presentation	Communication and Interpersonal Skills; and Love, Inc., and United Community Builders Presentations	Tuesday, September 17, 2019
Life Skills Session II and CBO Supportive Services Presentation	Emotional Intelligence; and Cover Letter and Resume Writing Presentation	Thursday, September 19, 2019
Life Skills Session III and CBO Supportive Services Presentation	Problem Solving and Critical Thinking; and Cradle to Career and City of Columbia-Supplier Diversity	Tuesday, September 24, 2019
Life Skills Session IV and CBO Supportive Services Presentation	Social Skills; and MOSource Link, Job Point, and United Way	Thursday, September 26, 2019

Phase IV

Corporation/Employer Presentations	Industry Connections w/ Moss Transportation Solutions; Kliethermes Homes and Remodeling; Columbia College; Kelly Services, and Huebert Builders	Tuesday, October 1, 2019
Corporation/Employer Presentations	Industry Connections w/ Shelter Insurance, Columbia Public Schools, Veterans United, Deline Holdings, Socket Internet	Thursday, October 3, 2019

Phase V

Phase V	Participant Follow-up and Networking with CBOs and Corporations	October 1-31, 2019

The Final Close Out

Final Close Out Session	Testimonials, Certificates of Completion, and Participant Post-Surveys	Thursday, October 31, 2019

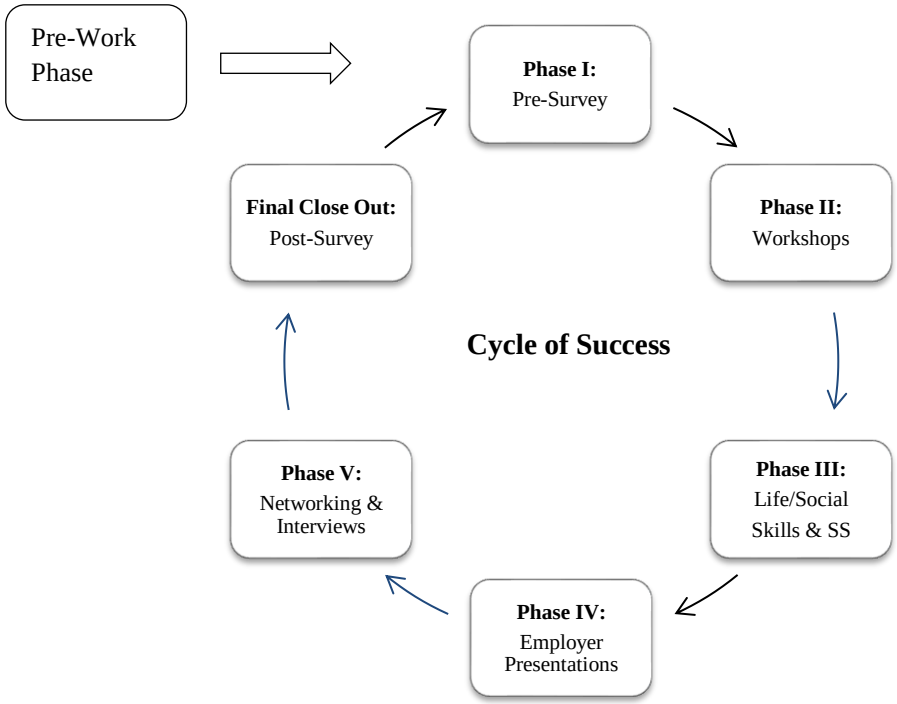


Figure 6.1. Project implementation flowchart

In order to forgo the expense of renting a facility to hold these meetings, each of these sessions were held at the church, Urban Empowerment Ministries on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm. Additionally, holding these meetings at the church provided an opportunity for the church participants and community partners to engage a different experience in regard to what the church has to offer in addition to regular Sunday and Wednesday church services.

Once the project proposal was approved on July 22, 2019, the first step in the ten-week collaboration project methodology was to meet with the context associates to provide an overview of the project and to explain the project schedule. This meeting was

held on Tuesday, July 23, 2019. During this meeting, we discussed the immediate project needs, the next steps for project preparation, and assigned various task to each associate. As previously mentioned, this meeting and several subsequent meetings, which took place before the official project launch and initiated the project's "Pre-work" responsibilities.

The Pre-Work Phase

The project "pre-work" phase included activities focused on the church, the participants, the CBOs and corporations. Pre-work activities for the church included announcing the project during Sunday and Wednesday church services in order to recruit participants for the project. When the project was announced during these services, participants were able to sign-up for the project with the context associates after service and ask questions about the project.

Pre-work activities for the CBOs and corporations included drafting and sending invitation letters for each to participate in the project, as well as incorporating the ABCD approach, whereas the letters to these entities included questions to assess the strengths of these organizations in order to analyze their abilities to engage disadvantaged communities. Questions in the letters for the CBOs training programs asked these entities to share information about any existing programs that assist potential employees to become employed or gainfully employed. The letters for corporations included the following:

1. Provide the company's EEI (Employee Expectation Identification) or the minimal expectations for potential employees.

2. Provide information about any existing programs the company engages in to assist potential employees or present employees to become gainfully/more gainfully employed. For example, upskilling, job coaching/training, job fairs or other community partnerships/collaborations.

Overall, pre-work responsibilities included drafting and sending invitation letters to the CBOs and corporations (Appendix B), reserving the meeting location, and preparing the project materials for the "Kick-off" Session.

Another area in the pre-work phase of the project methodology was the project's church announcements, which began on Sunday, August 4, 2019. The church announcements took place during church services on Sundays and Wednesdays, during the month of August 2019, in order to alert individuals who may be interested in participating in the project. The context associates were available after these services to sign individuals up for the project and answer questions about the project. At the conclusion of the announcement period, twenty-two individuals signed up for the project, including two of the context associates. In respect to confidentially of the participants, each individual who signed-up to participate in the project was assigned a number from 1000-1021; therefore, in this document, any specific participant will be identified by their assigned number.

Phase I

After several weeks of the announcements on Sundays and Wednesdays, Phase I of the project was launched with "Collaboration Kick-Off" meetings, which were held on Tuesday, August 27 and Thursday, August 29. Since the target audience for the project is a population of the community, who face multiple challenges with transportation, childcare and multiple jobs to make ends meet, two kick-off dates were intentionally

selected in order to give the participants, as well as the partners a choice of which session they would attend. The agenda for the "Kick-Off" meetings included introductions, project overview, and most importantly, the pre-survey for the participants (Appendix C).

At the conclusion of "Kick-Off" meetings, eighteen individuals had completed the participant intake process, including two context associates. The project proposal suggested that the context associates and I would select ten to twelve individuals between the ages of eighteen to forty-five, who are unemployed or underemployed, to participate in this project. However, as previously mentioned, we decided to allow all those interested to participate in the project, because each of these individuals met the socially or economically disadvantaged criteria. Additionally, in order to provide the participants a detailed view into the types of careers in which they were interested, one of the project CBO partners, Jane Williams with Love, Inc., shared the "O*NET Interest Profiler Short Form (Appendix D)," which is sponsored by the United States Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration and developed by the National Center for O*NET Development.[5] This form walks individuals through learning about their work interest and exploring careers that might link to those interest.[6] In addition to the pre-survey, each participant completed this form during the "Kick-Off" meetings.

The invitation letter to the CBOs and corporations, also included a request for their staff to attend the kick-off meetings. Although they were not required to attend, several individuals from a few of the agencies did attend. Additionally, as previously

[5] "O*Net Interest Profiler," O*Net Resource Center, accessed August 26, 2019, https://www.onetcenter.org/IP.html#paper-and-pencil.

[6] "O*Net Interest Profiler," O*Net Resource Center, accessed August 26, 2019, https://www.onetcenter.org/IP.html#paper-and-pencil.

mentioned, the invitation to the CBOs and corporations included a request for information regarding employee expectations; however, we did not receive any of this information before the kick-off meetings. Therefore, in continuation with the ABCD approach, during the "Kick-Off" meetings, the CBOs and corporations were given a Capacity Inventory Questionnaire (Appendix E), which included a question regarding the organization's minimum expectations for employees. These expectations were essential to review in order to include some of this information in the teaching sessions for the participants to further prepare them for interviews and or the upcoming hiring process.

As previously mentioned, the ABCD approach identifies the assets, skills, and strengths of individuals and communities. As a consequence, we are able to establish a connectedness between individuals and stakeholders in order to reduce economic inequalities, build economic empowerment, and change the quality of life of all those involved. Therefore, as we launched the project it was exciting, because it was understood that it is the capacities, skills, and abilities, which brings about community connectedness and working togetherness to address the concerns and issues that destroy the community and diminish access to opportunities.

Before we move into the Phase II Implementation section of this chapter, it is important to highlight the specific questions that were included in the participant's Pre-Survey, during the Phase I "Collaboration Kick-Off" Meetings. These are also the same questions posed to the participants in the Post-Survey, as well.

1. What skill areas are you experienced or interested in? (health care, office support, computer technology, construction and trades, maintenance, food service, child care, transportation, equipment operations, supervision and management, sales and retail, music, security, other)

2. What is the highest educational level that you've obtained? (GED, high school, associate degree, bachelor's degree, master's degree, doctorate)

3. When you think about your skills, what three areas do you do best?

4. Which of your skills are good enough that other people would hire you to do them?

5. Are there any skills you would like to teach?

6. What skills would you like to learn?

7. What type community service activities have you participated?

8. Have you considered starting a business?

9. What obstacles have kept you from starting the business?

10. Are you currently earning money on our own through a business endeavor?

Some of these questions in whole or in part are suggested by Kretzmann and McKnight.[7]

In addition to these questions, the following questions were included in order to evaluate the economic status and or equity of the participants.

1. Are you currently employed?

2. If so, what is your current pay, salary or income?

3. What is the highest level of pay, salary or income that you have received from a job?

4. What is the desired level of income that would allow you to live in a comfortable level of financial freedom?

5. What other support, guidance and or resources do you feel is needed to improve your personal net worth?

The context associates assisted each participant with answering these questions on individual computers, via Survey Monkey. The intake process is necessary to identify the area of employment considerations for the participants in order to identify areas in which

[7] Kretzmann and McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out*, 19-25.

to bring greater awareness. Finally, the survey captured the participant's contact information in order to maintain communication for the duration of the project, as well as future follow-up and connection upon completion of the project.

Phase II

Upon completion of the participant intake process, the next step in the process is Phase II, the "self-improvement" workshop sessions. As highlighted in the project schedule, the workshop sessions were launched the week after the "Kick-Off" meetings and were held on Tuesdays and Thursdays during the first and second week of September 2019. As previously mentioned, principles and precepts from Rick Warren's book, *The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth am I here For?* were utilized as a resources and foundational teaching material for each of these four sessions. In this book, Warren provides specific insights defining and determining your God-given purpose in life, in regard to your spiritual purpose, your natural purpose, your purpose in church, as well as your purpose in your career.[8]

The first workshop in Phase II entitled "Finding Your Purpose" was held on Tuesday, September 3, 2019 (Appendix F). This workshop focused on the understanding that everyone has a God-given purpose. We gain our greatest fulfillment, when we live that purpose. Consequently, if we can identify our God-given purpose, then we can please God and enjoy the pleasures of the promises of God. The foundational scripture for this workshop was Ephesians Chapter one verses ten through eleven, "as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In

[8] Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life*.

Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will."

Additional teaching material for this workshop utilized from Warren's book included points from Day Two, "You are Not an Accident," which highlights that "Your parents may not have planned you, but God did."[9] This workshop included an overview of Day Five, "Seeing Life from God's View," which explains that "The way you see your life SHAPES your life."[10] In this book SHAPE is an acronym for "Spiritual gifts, Heart, Abilities, Personality and Experience," which will be addressed further in this chapter.[11] Finally, this workshop includes thoughts from Day Twenty-Nine, "Accepting Your Assignment," which explains how we were created, we were saved, we are called and commanded to serve God.[12] This session was important to encourage the participants to know that they will find value and worth in identifying their purpose in God.

The second workshop in Phase II entitled "Writing Your Vision" was held on Thursday, September 5, 2019 (Appendix G), and was taught by context associate, Shannon Wilson. This workshop focused on being able to write your personal vision and mission statement that correlate to your God-given purpose. The ability to communicate and articulate who God has called you to be is important in motivating one to stay consistent in their journey to fulfill their purpose. The foundational scripture for this workshop is Ephesians chapter two verse ten, "For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life."

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[9] Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life*, 26.

[10] Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life*, 44.

[11] Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life*, 234.

[12] Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life*, 225-229.

Additionally, Habakkuk chapter two verse two instructs us to, "Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so that a runner may read it." During this workshop, we highlighted a few points from Warren's book regarding a person's individual SHAPE, as previously mentioned. Warren notes that your SHAPE is your spiritual gift, and in order to identify your SHAPE you must "listen to your heart."[13] Additionally, once you identify your SHAPE or your spiritual gifts, you must use your abilities, because they "come from God."[14] Finally, we highlighted that one should translate their purpose into a written vision and embrace it as their personality.

The third workshop in Phase II entitled "Finishing What You Started" was held on Tuesday, September 10, 2019 (Appendix H). This workshop reminded the participants that even after one finds their sweet-spot, choice career or purpose, life is going to happen, which means that there are going to be situations, problems and life circumstances. However, when life happens, we have to keep our focus on our purpose, passion and our SHAPE. The foundational scripture for this workshop was Philippians chapter one verse six, where the Apostle Paul states, "I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ." As a consequence, we have to press through life's problems knowing that nothing can prevent us from accomplishing our purpose other than us. In order to stay focused on our goals and plans, we must be confident in who God has made us. In order to finish what you started, one must have a prayer life, write the vision and stick to it!

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[13] Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life*, 232-237.

[14] Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life*, 240.

This session also highlighted Warren's perspective that, "Once you know what God wants you to do, the blessing comes in actually doing it."[15]

The fourth workshop in Phase II entitled "Leaving a Legacy" was held on Thursday, September 12, 2019 (Appendix I). This workshop informed the participants that the reason why we have to achieve our purpose, take advantage of opportunities and have an increased quality of life, is because our individual accomplishments are not only about us. The importance of your success is giving your family and loved ones a step up in life, as well. The foundational scripture for this workshop is found in Proverbs chapter thirteen verse twenty-two, which notes "The good leave an inheritance to their children's children." According to Dictionary.com, one of the meanings of legacy is "inheritance."[16] Therefore, leaving a legacy is to pass down an inherence. Based upon the target audience, a part of the inheritance that needs to be left to create a legacy is not only earthly possessions, which is typically considered for success, but there are other important attributes. Some of these include motivation, education and salvation. This information was taught during this workshop to let participants know that when they overcome, they not only break the cycle of these concerns in their own lives, but they create a cycle of success for those coming after them.

Phase III

Phase III of the project took place during the third and fourth week of September, and included life skills and social skills trainings, as well as supportive services

[15] Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life*, 310.

[16] "Inheritance," Dictionary.com, accessed December 16, 2019, https://www.dictionary.com/browse/inheritance?s=t.

presentations from CBOs. During the kick-off meetings, several CBOs and corporations identified the tools and resources that these entities utilize to hire, train, and retain socially and economically disadvantaged individuals. It is through these presentations that we bring a greater awareness to the participants of the resources available to them in the community. Moreover, the life skills and social skills trainings provided by the facilitators (context associates and me) were intended to introduce the participants the types of skills necessary to personally excel and professionally succeed. Some information for the life and social skills sessions were collected from skillsyouneed.com.

On Tuesday, September 17, 2019, context associate, D'Andre Thompson, taught Life Skills Session I (Appendix J), which focused on communication and personal skills. During this session, D'Andre shared the importance of effective communication. He shared that effective communication is a two-way process, and as a consequence, good communication skills can improve your way of life and strengthen relationships, but bad communication skills can disrupt relationships and prevent solutions from being discovered.[17] Additionally, this session focused on the importance of interpersonal skills, such as verbal and non-verbal communication. D'Andre taught that verbal communication is about what you say, and how your get your message across, whereas non-verbal communication involves non-verbal signals, gestures, facial expressions, body language, tone of voice, and even appearance to convey a message.[18]

[17] "The Importance of Good Communication Skills," Communication Skills, accessed September 16, 2019, www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/communication-skills.html.

[18] "Interpersonal Communication Skills," Communication Skills, accessed September 16, 2019, www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/communication-skills.html.

The life and social skills section of the session lasted approximately forty-five minutes. Afterwards, the supportive services presentations for the evening were from Jane Williams with Love, Inc., and Damien Dean with United Community Builders. Love, Inc., is a faith-based organization which provides resources and counseling for those in need.[19] During this session, Jane shared the resources that the organization has available, such as job application information, a list of employers that frequently hire, a list of college and trade schools, as well as a list of organizations that provide job search assistance (Appendix K). United Community Builders is a local faith-based organization that provides "community-wide programs that focus on education, mentor-ships, job-readiness training and the performing arts."[20] Damien provided the participants an overview of how these programs serve the community and how the participants may have access to them for themselves or for their family and friends (Appendix L).

On Thursday, September 19, 2019, context associate, Shannon Wilson, taught Life Skills Session II (Appendix M), which focused on emotional intelligence. During this session, Shannon shared that emotional intelligence is essential to personal and professional success. Key components to leveraging emotional intelligence is self-awareness, self-management, motivation, empathy and social skills.[21] Additionally, Shannon communicated five ways to develop, enhance and grow your emotional intelligence. Those include: 1) observe how you feel, react and behave, 2) take responsibility for your emotions, feelings and behavior, 3) know your stressors, 4) rise up

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[19] "About Love Inc," Columbia Love Inc., accessed January 19, 2019, http://www.columbialoveinc.org/#.

[20] "About," United Community Builders, accessed January 19, 2019, https://ucbuilders.org.

[21] "The Five Components," Emotional Intelligence, accessed September 18, 2019, http://theimportanceofemotionalintelligence.weebly.com/the-5-components.html.

from adversity, and 5) practice empathy.[22] Additionally, during the second part of the session, on behalf of Urban Empowerment's Power Players Ministry, Shannon shared information regarding cover letters and resumes (Appendix N).

On Tuesday, September 24, 2019, D'Andre taught Life Skills Session III, which focused on problem solving and critical thinking. During this session, D'Andre shared that "problem-solving is a requisite of discovery and sound decision-making."[23] According to Skillsyouneed.com, problem solving involves problem identification, structuring the problem, look for possible solutions, making a decision, implementation, and monitoring feedback.[24] Additionally, during this session, D'Andre discussed the responsibility of critical thinking, which requires the ability to reason.[25] Critical thinking requires the benefit of foresight, and as a consequence, one must consider contingencies and maximizing the potential outcomes.[26] D'Andre challenged the participants to consider the obstacles you face before acting upon an important decision, and that personal biases contribute to our ability to make assessments and determine decisions because of our personal experiences.[27]

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[22] "Emotional Intelligence Pocketbook," O'Reilly, accessed September 18, 2019, https://www.oreilly.com/library/view/emotional-intelligence-pocketbook/9780857087300/#toc-start.

[23] "Interpersonal Relationships Fail and Businesses Fail Because of Poor Problem Solving," Skills You Need, accessed September 16, 2019, www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/problem-solving.html.

[24] "Interpersonal Relationships Fail and Businesses Fail Because of Poor Problem Solving," Skills You Need, accessed September 16, 2019, www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/problem-solving.html.

[25] "What is Critical Thinking," Skills You Need, accessed September 16, 2019, www.skillsyouneed.com/learn/critical-thinking.html.

[26] "The Benefit of Foresight," Skills You Need, accessed September 16, 2019, www.skillsyouneed.com/learn/critical-thinking.html.

[27] "The Benefit of Foresight," Skills You Need, accessed September 16, 2019, www.skillsyouneed.com/learn/critical-thinking.html.

In addition to the life skills information presented on during this session, Crystal Kroner with Cradle to Career Alliance, and James Whitt with the City of Columbia, Supplier Diversity Program Development, attended the session to provide information on their programs. According to their website, the Cradle to Career Alliance (C2CA) "is an educational nonprofit serving Boone County, Missouri…determined to eliminate educational disparities based on race and socio-economic status and to help all of our children reach their highest potential to prepare them for quality careers and an economically stable future. Our focus is on *Excellence with Equity*."[28]

Once the project was launched, I quickly realized the need to share resources with the participants that may not have an immediate impact upon their employment plight. One of the responsibilities of a project such as this one is to expose the participants to other community resources that may provide support to close family members and friends. Often individuals cannot retain a level of success due to the lack of support in other areas of their families, such as with children. Therefore, Crystal shared information about how C2CA is positioned to support the community by partnering with organizations and corporations to remove barriers for children to succeed toward the career of their choice. Consequently, this program is important to the participants, because it is easier to change the trajectory of your entire family, when not only you succeed, but when you utilize the resources available to you to help those coming after you succeed, as well.

When the project launched, the focus was predominately on employment; however, one of things that was identified during the participant assessments was that not

[28] "About," Cradle to Career Alliance, accessed November 18, 2019, http://www.cradletocareeralliance.org/about-us.

all of the participants were interested in locating a job, but some were interested in entrepreneurism. Therefore, I contacted a few resources that might share insight on business opportunities, business development and business plans. During this session, James Whitt with the City of Columbia Supplier Diversity Program Development discussed how to do business with the city, as well as shared how to locate other minority and women owned business enterprises in the City of Columbia through their Minority and Women Owned Business Directory.[29] He also shared information on his involvement with The Sharp End Heritage Committee, which worked to memorialize with a plaque the area between Fifth and Sixth Streets on Walnut in downtown Columbia. The area was once a vibrant African American business community.

On Thursday, September 26, 2019, Shannon led Life Skills Session IV, which was a general discussion on successful social skills, such as up-skilling, budgeting and financial planning. At the conclusion of this social skills session, several CBOs shared information on their programs. Andrew Grabau, with the Heart of Missouri United Way, presented on the role and the responsibility of this organization, which focuses on "improving lives and building stronger communities."[30] Felecia Qualls, with Job Point, highlighted their training programs and certifications, as the organization specializes "in preparing individuals to enter the workforce, while meeting a critical need of the business community."[31] Additionally, Alexces Bartley with the MOSourceLink discussed the programs and assistance they provide to entrepreneurs, such business plans and business

[29] "Minority and Women Owned Business Director," City of Columbia, accessed November 18, 2019, https://www.como.gov/CMS/mwob-directory/public.php.

[30] "What is United Way?" Heart of Missouri United Way, accessed January 19, 2019, https://www.uwheartmo.org/frequently-asked-questions.

[31] "About," Job Point, accessed January 19, 2019, http://www.jobpointmo.com/about.

development, as well as their Resource Rail. According to their website, "MOSourceLink's mission is to help entrepreneurs and small businesses across the state of Missouri grow and succeed by providing free, easy access to the help you need - when you need it."[32] It is my hope that these life and social skills, technical trainings, as well as supportive services sessions provided necessary resources to sharpen the skills of the participants in order to further prepare them for their new employment journey and retention.

Phase IV

Upon the completion of the church and CBOs inspiring, motivating and educating, as well as preparing the participants for employment and or more gainful employment, it is now time to introduce and expose the participants to hiring corporations. These are local employers that have agreed to partner with the church to introduce their organization to the participants. During the Kick-Off Meetings, the participants completed the pre-survey and the O*Net Interest Profiler Short Form, which revealed their career interest. Therefore, we utilized these results to the best of our ability to select which employers participated in Phase IV of the project.

As we entered this phase of the project, we began to contact with multiple employers throughout the city. There are several employers in which the church was already in relationship with to invite to the sessions; however, there are multiple other employers that we contacted to collaborate and participate in this project, based upon the results of the participant assessments. Several of the CBOs, Job Point, United Way and

[32] "About," MOSourceLink, accessed November 18, 2019, https://www.mosourcelink.com/about-us.

Love, Inc., were utilized as a resource to identify other employers, as needed. Additionally, the context associates and professional associates provided names of other employers to be considered for the project. These entities were contacted via email communication (Appendix O) and phone calls. The type of employers that were contacted included construction and insurance companies, manufacturing, temp and health care services, and government agencies. Several firms had to be contacted multiple times, but for some, it only took one contact for them to participate.

As previously mentioned, two dates were selected for employer presentations so that the participants and employers had a couple of options to attend. The participants introduced themselves and shared their career interests. The assignment for the corporations was very simple. It included introducing their organization, sharing employment opportunities and discussing their hiring processes.

On Tuesday, October 1, 2019, five employers attended the session. Johnnie Moss shared information on his current transportation employment, and his new startup business Moss Transport Solutions, which is a future potential employer in transportation services. Joe Weber provided information on Kliethermes Homes and Remodeling, which is a custom home remodeling company.[33] Michelle McClaulley with Columbia College, whose mission is to improve "lives by providing quality education to both traditional and nontraditional students, helping them achieve their true potential" attended to partner and share opportunities.[34] Allen Jennings with Kelly Services, which according to their

[33] "About," Kliethermes Homes and Remodeling, accessed November 20, 2019, https://kliethermes.com/about-us.

[34] "Mission, Vision and Values," Columbia College, accessed November 20, 2019, https://www.ccis.edu/about/mission.aspx.

website connect "talented people to companies in need of their skills," shared their company's information.[35] Also, Susan Hart with Huebert Builders, Inc., which is a local commercial construction and remodeling services company that has been in business in Columbia, Missouri, since 1986, attended to share how to engage their firm, as well.[36] The evening concluded with the participants and corporations exchanging information and making connections.

The final session for Phase IV, the employer presentations, was held on Thursday, October 3, 2019, and five employers attended this session, as well. Stayce Smith shared job opportunities and the application process for Shelter Insurance, which opened in 1946, and provides protection for homes, life, car, farm, and businesses, in eighteen states.[37] Furthermore, upon review of Shelter's website, the firm has multiple careers available in customer service, information technology, claims, payroll and benefits, as well as insurance agents.[38] Nikki Smith and Carla London with the Columbia Public Schools provided information on the public schools system's processes for opportunities. According to their website, the Columbia Public Schools System is the seventh largest district in the state, which includes twenty-one elementary schools, six middle schools, four high schools and the Columbia Area Career Center.[39] Several of the participants

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[35] "About," Kelly, accessed November 20, 2019, https://www.kellyservices.us/us/about-us/.

[36] "About Huebert Builders," Huebert Builders Inc., accessed January 20, 2019, https://huebertbuilders.com/about-us/.

[37] "About Shelter," Shelter Insurance, accessed January 20, 2019, https://www.shelterinsurance.com/aboutshelter/.

[38] "Careers," Shelter Insurance, accessed January 20, 2019, https://www.shelterinsurance.com/careers/.

[39] "About," Columbia Public Schools, accessed November 21, 2019, https://www.cpsk12.org/domain/70.

have college degrees; therefore, the public school system has opportunities for teachers and administrators.

Jerome Larkins with Veterans United attended the session and shared information on this enterprise, which assist military veterans with obtaining home loans.[40] This entity could provide opportunities in a variety of careers, such as customer service, sales and management. Additionally, Janet Moss with Socket Internet provided the participants information regarding their firm, which is a local telecommunications provider.[41] Finally, Randy Minchew with Deline Holdings attended the session and shared information about their holdings company, which houses a number of firms with job and career opportunities. Additionally, he discussed how the company make investments into individuals with entrepreneurial endeavors, as well. Randy and several others were very inspirational, whereas they shared some of their life experience and how they arrived in the position in which they are in.

As these partners shared their personal stories, these sessions became more of what fellowship and friendship should looks like in a collaborative initiative. As a consequence, we have sincere relationships being established, which results in a positive impact for wholeness and healing in our community. That's an added benefit and blessing to the church being the seat and impetus for these discussions, because is liberates the participants and the partners to be transparent in their experiences. As a result, barriers fall down and people feel comfortable working together for a greater good (Appendix P).

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[40] "About Veterans United," Veterans United, accessed January 20, 2019, https://www.veteransunited.com/about/.

[41] "About," Socket, accessed November 21, 2019, https://www.socket.net/about-us.

Before we move into Phase V, the participant follow-up and connection phase, individuals from the City of Columbia Human Resources were not available to attend the employer sessions in order to present information on their hiring process; however, the Human Resources Director did respond via email with information on how the participants may engage with the city for opportunities.

Phase V

Phase V of the project is where the participants got to work! This is the time in the project where the participants executed the training, education, information and motivation that they received during the previous phases of the project in order to network with the partners. Although the employer presentations kicked-off on October 1, 2019, the participants were able to begin completing applications, interviewing and connecting with the employers anytime during the project. However, the official timeframe for this phase is October 1-31, 2019, since the final project close out date was Thursday, October 31, 2019. During this phase of the project, there were no formal meetings, but the context associates and I stayed in constant contact with the participants face-to-face, and via phone, text message and email.

The communication with the participants included “friendly-reminders” to continue their networking with any of the CBOs or corporations in which they had been introduced. This encouragement was to keep them motivated, because we knew that life would happen and, sometimes, we have great intentions to follow-up with people that we have come in contact with, but things come up and we can easily get distracted. Additionally, if any of the context associates or I became aware of events, activities or

opportunities that may be beneficial for the participants, we shared that information. For example, Shelter Insurance held a "Talent and Opportunities Open House," on Wednesday, October 2, 2019, and we shared this event with the participants. Additionally, it came to our attention that a "Fall Career Event," was to be held at the Columbia Mall on Wednesday, October 16, 2019, and we forwarded that information to the participants, as well (Appendix Q).

Final Close Out Session

The final close out session was held on Thursday, October 31, 2019, at 6:30 pm at Urban Empowerment Ministries. This session was the culmination of the all the activities for the project, which included several important responsibilities. The first responsibility was to celebrate the completion of those who made it through the entire program. There were sixteen of the eighteen participants who made it through to this session and completed the post-survey. It was important to celebrate the completion of these individuals, because congratulatory efforts always provide inspiration to encourage people to keep moving forward. Additionally, to show appreciation for the participant's attendance and attention throughout the weeks of the project, the participants received a "Certificate of Completion," as well (Appendix R).

Finally, the final close out session provided the opportunity for the participants to complete the project "post-survey," as well. As previously mentioned, the same questions included in the "pre-survey" was also provided for the "post-survey," in order to capture if there was a gain in awareness or a change in social equity for the participants as they matriculated through the program. Context associates walked the participants through the

post-survey in the same manner as they did with the pre-survey. Additionally, we took the opportunity to obtain further information from the participants by emailing them an electronic survey that they could complete via Survey Monkey on their own time. The following questions were included:

1. What was most helpful about the "Finding Your Purpose" teaching session?
2. What was most helpful about the "Writing Your Vision" teaching session?
3. What was most helpful about the "Finishing What You Start" teaching sessions?
4. What was most helpful about the "Living to Leave a Legacy" teaching session?
5. What was most helpful about the soft skills, life skills and technical skills training session?
6. What was most helpful about the supportive services and informational resource session?
7. What other teachings or trainings would have been helpful?
8. What session(s) would you change or do different?

The purpose and intent of these questions were to gain insight and feedback from the participants to help improve the program moving forward.

The CBO and corporation partners were also invited to attend the final close out session. Steve Smith, the chief executive officer, with Job Point attended the session and shared comments with the participant, as well as expressed his appreciation for the project. The email invitation to the partners included a Survey Monkey link for them to provide any comments regarding the project. The following questions were asked of the partners:

1. Was this project helpful for your entity?
2. What would you do differently?

3. Did any participants contact you?
4. Were any participants assisted or interviewed by your entity?
5. Were any participants hired?

Finally, one of the project's professional associates, Rod Casey, who is the director the Theological Education Initiative in Columbia, Missouri, attended the final session and shared comments of inspiration for the participants.

Summary of Learnings

Pre-Survey Results

As we enter in the Summary of Learnings section, the final project analysis will be through triangulation evaluation of the "social equity" gained by the participants through a review of the pre- and post-surveys. This review will include: 1) an assessment, the awareness gained by participants based upon the information gained during the workshops and life social skill sessions and the information shared during the supportive services sessions; 2) an evaluation of the change or progress of the wholistic financial impact of the participants surveyed from the beginning of the project to the conclusion; and 3) an anecdotal analysis of the value added by the relationships formed through the project. The intent is to critique if the participants gained greater awareness of opportunities and resources, as well as received employment, and if the employment increased the financial equity of the participants.

As previously mentioned, during the project "Kick-off," there were eighteen participants who took the "pre-survey," including two of the context associates. The demographics of the pre-surveys reveal the 39% of the participants are between the ages

of twenty-five through thirty-four years old. The next largest group are between the ages of forty-five through fifty-four, which is 22%, and 17% are between the ages of thirty-five through forty-four. Eleven percent are between the ages of eighteen through twenty-four, but 6% are between the ages of fifty-five through sixty-four. One participant is above the age of sixty-five years old.

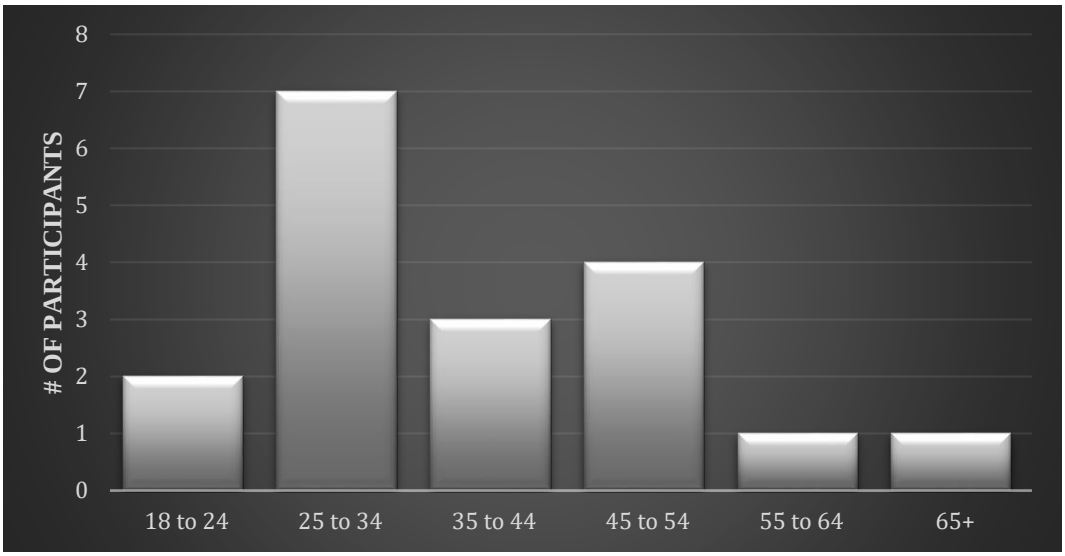


Figure 6.2. Participant age demographics

Seventy-two percent of the participants are women and the remaining 28% are men. All of the participants are African American, except for one Caucasian woman. The average number of people living in the household of these participants is 2.5 people, with five being the largest number in any of the participant's household and one being the lowest.

In regarding to the total household income, 39% of the participants household income is between $30,000 and $49,999 per year. Seventeen percent is under $15,000, and 11% is between $15,000 and $29,999. Seventeen percent is between $50,000 and $74,999, and 17% is between $75,000 and $99,999. None of the participants household income exceeded $100,000 per year.

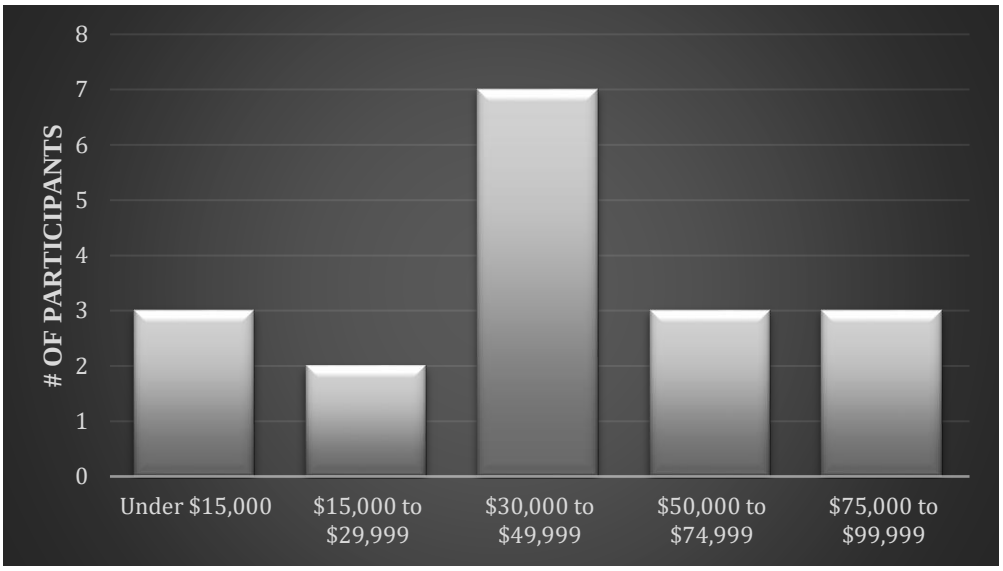


Figure 6.3. Pre-survey participant household income

It is typically known that there is a correlation between education and economic stability. Consequently, 33% of the participants hold a bachelor's degree. Twenty-two percent hold a master's degree, and one participant has a terminal degree. One participant holds an associate degree, and three participants has some college. Three participants hold high school diplomas or general education diplomas (GED).

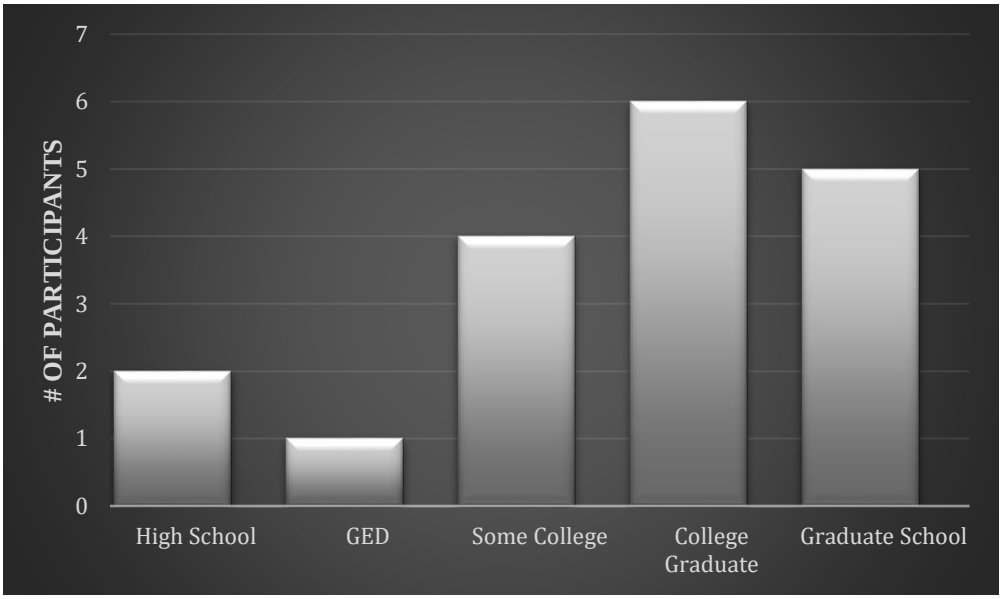


Figure 6.4. Pre-survey participant education levels

In regard to employment, seventy-eight percent of the participants are employed and 22% were not employed. One of the participants earn $75,000 or more annual. The next highest earning of the participants is $55,000 per year. The average annual earnings evaluated during the pre-survey, based upon the participant's responses, was $35,671.68. Additionally, in order to discern the level of pay that would allow the participants to live in a comfortable level of financial freedom, many of the participants responded with ranges from an additional 40% of their current salary to "millions." The participants were asked what other support they believed would be necessary to assist them in improving their personal net worth and the answers varied from finances, resume building, education motivation, computer literacy, effective support groups, certificates, entrepreneurial resources, mentorship, life coaching, computer skills, investment resources writing refresher course, job training, spiritual guidance, spouse, mental support, work for self and better jobs.

As the pre-survey continues, we asked the participants about their work skills and career interest. In regard to career options, participants were able to select from multiple career choices, as well as list career options that might not have been provided. The health care industry was the highest career option selected by the participants, followed by office support and or administration, supervision and management, sales and retail, childcare and food service. The next level of career options selected by participants were computer or information technology, transportation, equipment operations, music and security. Construction and trades were the least considered career options. On the other hand, the participants listed other career options of their interest, such as industrial, manufacturing, housekeeping, mechanic, social work, law, project management,

broadcasting, banking and finance. In order for the participants to be successful in their personal and professional lives, they must identify their passion and purpose. This section of the survey assists the participants with this identification, as well as provides the context associates and me important information for the collaboration process.

One of the benefits of the ABCD approach is determining the strengths of the individuals in the community one intends to serve or support. In order to make this observation for the project, it was important to understand work skills in which the participants believed they did best. The participants answered retail, customer service, computer, communication skills, interpersonal skills, craftmanship, data, organization, putting people in the right position, emotional intelligence, project management, administration, healthcare, office support, childcare, law, management, working with people, counseling, troubleshooting, conflict resolution, equipment operation, healthcare, training and supervising, record keeping, as well as data analyst. Additionally, many of these same skills were skills the participants listed as skills in which other people would hire them to perform.

Many of these skills listed by the participants are also highlighted as skills in which they have the ability to teach. However, other interesting skills appeared as a result of this question, as well. Those skills included dance, cooking and catering, social, driver skills, football, track, fitness, special education, art, writing, music, broadcasting, screen writing, set design and acting. The answers to this set of questions reveal an enormous amount of not only technical skills, but music, arts and theater skills, which expands beyond traditional types of employment to opportunities that are more unconventional. By unconventional, I mean beyond a regular 8:00 to 5:00 job; therefore, some of these

participants might be interested in the careers in the performing arts, music or theater. Or, they may be interested in volunteering in a community program or teaching in a not-for-profit organization.

The ABCD approach encourages the opportunity for those who have benefited from these processes or programs to position themselves to give back to those in the community from which they come. Therefore, we also asked the participants to list skills that they would like to teach. The participants listed leadership, management, computer skills, psychology, computer literacy, effective communication, book publishing process, office skills, emotional intelligence, information technology, programming, quality control communications, life coaching and sports.

Consequently, we also asked the participants to list community service activities in which they are participating in or have participated in. The list is very intriguing. The participants highlighted community programs, such as Moving Ahead, Youth Empowerment Zone, Phoenix House, Habitat for Humanity, Love, Inc., Blue Thunder Track Club, Veteran Affairs Recreational Therapy and United Way. They also listed volunteering in city neighborhood programs, the church, youth sports, e-soccer, sororities, pride festival, poker tournament, and world aids day. These activities reveal how multifaceted, talented and giving these individuals really are, as well as, it shows how much of an asset any of these individuals would be for any employer. All one needs is a chance to connect their passion to an opportunity, and as a consequence, enhance the social equity of the individual.

Another area of interest that was intricate for us to explore was the entrepreneurial perspective of the participants. Eighty-eight percent of the participants reported that they

have considered starting a business. The participants highlighted a number of obstacles that have kept them from starting a business. These obstacles included, finances and capital, lack of experience, available space, time commitments after work, licensing, business plans and writing down the vision, the planning process, motivation and previous incarceration. However, 47% of the participants reported they are currently earning money through a business endeavor.

As seen, these individuals have desires and dreams, but in many ways, life-happened or personal circumstances did not allow them to succeed in some area of their passion. However, the intent of the latter part of the "pre-survey" was to evaluate the extent of familiarity that the participants might have with some essential life and social skills that may help them excel personally, professionally and entrepreneurially. These questions correlate with the life skills and social skills sessions that we intended to teach in order to prepare the participants for employment or gainful employment. In regard to emotional intelligence, 41% reported being somewhat familiar with this skill. Thirty-five percent were very familiar but only 12% were extremely familiar with emotional intelligence. Twelve percent were not so familiar.

Regarding effective communication skills, 12% reported not being so familiar with this skill. Twenty-four reported being somewhat familiar, 41% reported being very familiar and 24% reported being extremely familiar with this skill. In regard to interpersonal skills, only 6% were extremely familiar with this skill; however, 47% were very familiar, and 29% were somewhat familiar. Twelve percent were not at all familiar. Twelve percent were extremely familiar with problem solving and critical thinking skills, but 65% were very familiar. Twenty-four percent were somewhat familiar with problem

solving and critical thinking. On the other hand, 71% were familiar with social skills, and 18% were extremely familiar. Twelve percent were somewhat familiar with social skills. Although many of the skills appeared to be very familiar to the participants, social skills appeared to be the most familiar skill recognized by the participants.

Finally, in regard to necessary skills to be successful, the participants listed a number of skills that they considered would be essential for them. The list included patience, communication, education, computer literacy, financial literacy, time management, humility, certifications, leadership, proper grammar and teamwork, just to name a few. One participant listed just getting a job, as a skill that would help them be successful.

Post-Survey Results

As previously mentioned, eighteen participants completed the "pre-survey;" sixteen completed the "post-survey," yielding an 88.9% project participation rate. We believe this participation rate was achieved because of the overwhelming excitement of the participants for the project. Additionally, the context associates and I remained in constant contact with the participants throughout the life of the project, via phone, text message and email. Nevertheless, we were very pleased with the continued engagement of the participants during the entirety of the project.

Consequently, the post-survey results allow us to measure the effectiveness of the ten-week project. As mentioned, the same questions were asked in post-survey as were asked in the pre-survey in order to evaluate if the participants gained greater awareness of any intricate skills, services, resources or relationships that would increase their potential

for employment or gainful employment. Additionally, as a means of triangulation evaluation, the post-survey will provide information regarding the participants household income, employment, as well as their current pay, in order to determine if there was an increase in their financial equity.

The post-survey revealed that in regard to the total household income, 38% of the participants household income is between $30,000 and $49,999 per year. Twelve percent is under $15,000, and 12% is between $15,000 and $29,999. Nineteen percent is between $50,000 and $74,999, and 19% is between $75,000 and $99,999. None of the participants household income exceeded $100,000 per year.

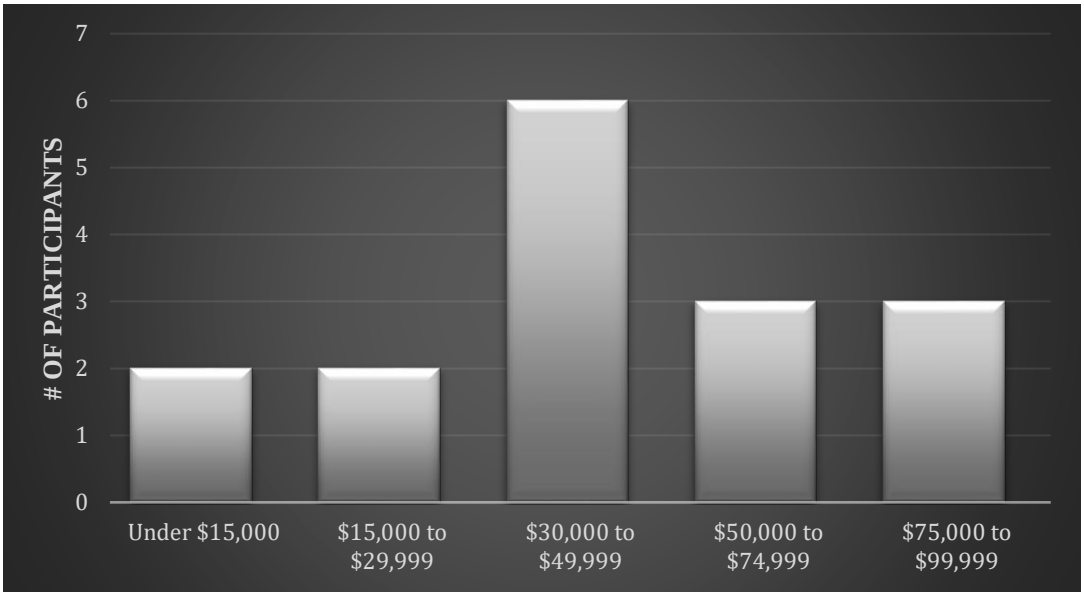


Figure 6.5. Post-survey participant household income

Based upon these responses, it appears that there was no significant change in the participant's households since the implementation of the project. As a result of the post-surveys, the only significant change reported by the participants is in the areas of those who have associate degrees, those who have some college and those who have high school or GED. The post-surveys reveal that two of the participants hold associate degrees, as opposed to one in the pre-survey. Two have some college as opposed to three

in the pre-survey, and one has a high school diploma or GED, as opposed to three in the pre-survey.

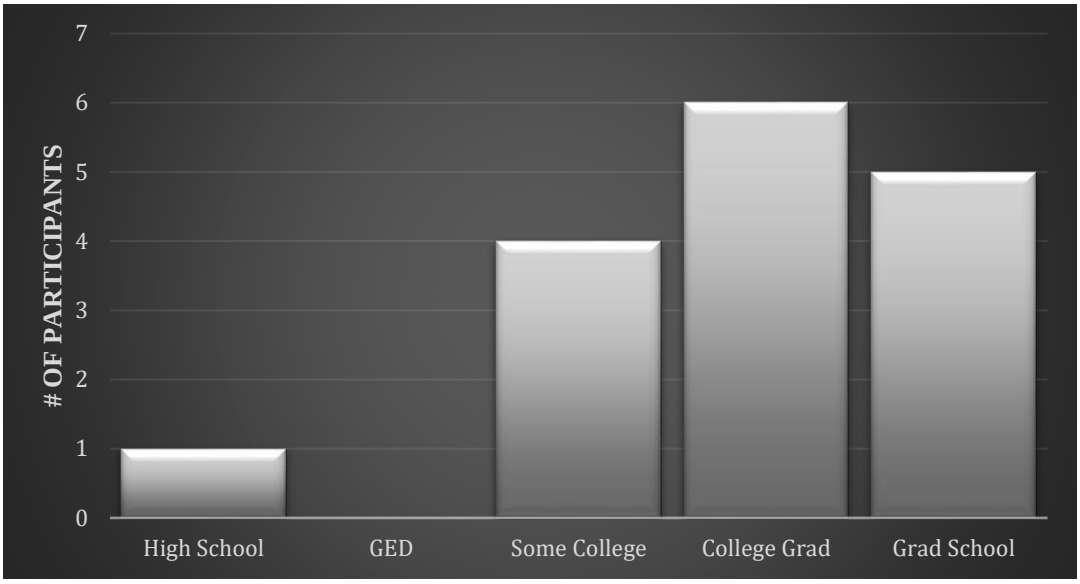


Figure 6.6. Post-survey participant education levels

The variation in these results appear to rest in the absence of the two participants who did not complete the post-survey. Nevertheless, based upon these findings, I determine that there is no significant change in the participant's level of education as a whole, during the ten-week project.

In regard to employment, the post-survey reveals that eighty-one percent of the participants are employed, as opposed to 78% in the pre-survey, and 19% were not employed, as opposed to 22% identified in the pre-survey. According to this finding, the difference in the employment status appears to be linked to the participants who did not complete the post-survey. During the post-survey, one of the participants identified earning more than $94,000 annual. The next highest earning of the participants identified is $55,000 per year. The average annual earnings for the participants evaluated during the post-survey was $37,148.65, compared to $35,671.68 identified in the pre-survey. This is a 4% increase in annual earnings for the participants, as a whole. This is a significant

difference in financial equity for the group as a whole from the beginning of the ten-week project.

As in the pre-survey, the post-survey included the question regarding what level of pay the participants deem desirable to live in a comfortable level of financial freedom. The participants responded with similar salaries and dollar amounts highlighted in the initial pre-survey. Therefore, there does not appear to be any significant difference. Additionally, the post-survey asked the participants to describe what other support they believed would be necessary to assist them in improving their personal net worth, and the answers included entrepreneurial mentorship, opportunity, HVAC class through Job Point, financial growth and more education, financial counseling and debt reduction, better job, connections, more contracts and more business, accountability, more education, computer knowledge, and professional network. Interestingly, one of the participants listed that they needed an advocate relationship at work with someone who will speak well of them in key situations. A few participants highlighted that they were not really sure what else they needed to be successful.

As with the pre-survey, we asked the participants about their work skills and career interest. However, now this question is posed after the workshops and informational sessions have been held, in order to see if there is a difference in the participant's enlightenment in regard to career choices and opportunities. Supervision and management is now the highest selected career choice, as opposed to the health care industry. This is encouraging because it appears that the participant's expectation of themselves may have increased. Health care was the next highest selected career option, followed by office support and administration, and sales and retail. The third-tier level of

career options included computer or information technology, food service and childcare. The final level of career options selected by participants were music, transportation, construction and trades, maintenance, equipment operations and security. As mentioned in the pre-survey area of these findings, construction and trades was the least considered career option; however, in the post survey, this area is joined by maintenance, equipment operations and security. It is interesting that these are the lowest considered career options despite including a construction employer on the roster to speak with the participants. Consequently, there appears to be a low interest in these types of careers from this demographic, which could be contributed to a number of reasons, like a lack of exposure to these industries, few role models currently in the industry to engage their interest to simply no interest in the labor fields. Since I am professionally engaged in the transportation and construction industry, I know these are great careers, which could benefit from a diverse work force.

As with the pre-survey, the participants had an option to select an "other' category, where they could include career options that were not listed. The participants listed other career options of their interest, such as entrepreneurship, law, education, executive coaching, human services, social work, cosmetology, and entertainment. Again, the importance of this category is to reveal the participants passion and purpose, which is essential if they are going to be successful in their personal and professional lives.

As identified in ABCD, the post-survey included a question to obtain the strengths of the participants by identifying skills in which they do best. The participants highlighted office support, motivation, collaboration, teaching, training, information

technology, communication, organization, guidance, dependency, education, administration, assistant, customer service, emotional intelligence, supervision, healthcare, childcare, music recording, song writing, analysis, business, cooking, management, following directions, interacting with people, desk work and putting out fires. There does not appear to be a significance difference with these post-survey results than with the pre-survey results. As with the pre-survey results, the participants listed many of these same items, as skills in which other people would hire them to perform.

As mentioned in the pre-survey findings, the ABCD approach encourages those who have benefited from the processes to give back to those in the community from which they came. As a consequence, one breaks bad cycles and creates new cycles of salvation, or cycles of success in the community. Therefore, as in the pre-survey, we asked the participants in the post-survey to list skills that they would like to teach. The participants listed interpersonal, communication, business law, business management, entrepreneurism, problem solving, guidance, software programs, customer service, human behavior and responses, emotional intelligence, sales and retails, managing skills, supervising skills, sales, analysis and business, cashier and organizing skills. One participant mentioned music recording and song writing. Consequently, many of the skills listed in the post-survey are similar to the pre-survey; however, there does appear to be an increased mention of life skills, such as communication, emotional intelligence and human behavior. This is encouraging, because it appears that the life skills workshops may have had a great influence on the participants.

As with the pre-survey, the post-survey asked the participants to list the community service activities in which they may be participating in or have participated

in. This is another way the ABCD approach assess and encourages individuals to give-back to the community to continue a cycle of salvation. Consequently, the post-survey list provided by the participants is very similar to the pre-survey list, which included community service organizations, neighborhood programs, and church programs. However, in addition to those listed in the pre-survey the following organizations were included in the post-survey, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., urban Empowerment Development Corporation, Dream Outside the Box, the Food Bank, Live Well By Faith and Concert for Calloway. As previously mentioned, the participants continue to be engaged in community service, which reveals how gifted and giving they are, as well as it shows how much of an asset any of these individuals would be for any employer, but it reveals how much of an asset these participants are to the community.

The post-survey evaluated the participant's entrepreneurial interest, as well. Eighty-eight percent of the participants reported that they have considered starting a business, which is the same as in the pre-survey. The post-survey inquired of obstacles that might have kept the participants from starting a business. These obstacles listed were very similar to the one listed in the pre-survey, which included finances and capital, resources, time, lack of knowledge about research, planning, equipment, land, building and mentoring. On the other hand, in the post-survey, five participants highlighted that their business has already started. One participant expressed no hindrances with getting their business started. Additionally, 56% of the participants reported they are currently earning money through a business endeavor in the post survey, as opposed to 47% in the pre-survey.

The final set of questions in the post-survey, as also included in the pre-survey, encompasses the participant's familiarity with essential life skills and socials that may help them succeed personally, professionally and entrepreneurially. As previously identified, the participants were exposed to several life and social skills sessions to enhance their proficiency in these areas to prepare the participants for employment or gainful employment. In regard to emotional intelligence 20% were somewhat familiar, 60% were very familiar and 20% were extremely familiar with this skill. There is a significant positive difference in familiarity with this skill in the participant's post-survey, as opposed to the pre-survey, whereas in the pre-survey only 12% reported being extremely familiar with emotional intelligence.

In regard to interpersonal skills, 20% reported being somewhat familiar, 53% reported being very familiar and 27% reported being extremely familiar with this skill in the post-survey results. There is also a positive difference in the participant's familiarity with this skill, whereas in the pre-survey, only 6% were extremely familiar with this skill, 47% were very familiar, and 29% were somewhat familiar in the pre-survey. Each of these areas experienced an increase in familiarity with interpersonal skills.

In regard to effective communication skills, the post-survey revealed that 67% of the participants were very familiar and 33% were extremely familiar with these skills. This reveals a significant increase in familiarity with effective communication skills in comparison to the pre-survey, whereas during the pre-survey, 12% of the participants reported not being so familiar with this skill. Twenty-four percent reported being somewhat familiar, 41% reported being very familiar and 24% reported being extremely familiar with this skill.

In regard to problem solving and critical thinking, the post-survey revealed that 7% of the participants were somewhat familiar, 47% were very familiar and 47% were extremely familiar with this skill. In comparison to the pre-survey, 65% were very familiar and 24% percent were somewhat familiar with problem solving and critical thinking. Even in this area, there is a significant increase in the participants being extremely familiar with these skills.

During the post-survey, 47% of the participants reported being very familiar with social skills and 57% extremely familiar. The pre-survey results reveal that 71% were familiar with social skills, and only 18% were extremely familiar; whereas 12% were somewhat familiar with social skills. Consequently, it appears that these sessions drastically changed the familiarity of these participants with these important skills which should increase the preparedness of the participants to engage gainful employment and be retained within any successful career option.

Finally, as in the pre-survey, the participants listed a number of other skills that they considered would be essential for them to be successful. The list included financial planning and financial literacy, public speaking, motivation, leadership, motivation, networking, technology, professional certifications, business planning and entrepreneurship skills. The additional skills highlighted by the participants in the post-survey were not much different than those listed in the pre-survey. One participant listed more emotional intelligence training. Therefore, these sessions resonated with the participants, because it appears that they are interested in continual improvement personally and professional.

Before we transition into the conclusion section of this final chapter, as outlined in the ABCD approach, assessing the strengths of community entities is a very important part of addressing community needs. Therefore, as mentioned in the methodology section, during the project kick-off and or whenever a partner attended a session, they were offered an opportunity to complete a "Capacity Inventory Questionnaire." Of the ten questionnaires completed by the partners, four were completed by CBOs and six were completed by hiring corporations. Although important for community movement, this assessment was not a part of the official pre- or post-survey evaluation. Therefore, I will not detail or summarize the results of this information in this section; however, I have attached copies of the completed forms (Appendix S).

Conclusion

The intent and purpose of this project is to enhance the social equity of the members of Urban Empowerment Ministries through intentional collaboration by bringing together CBOs and corporations facilitated by the church. Based upon the comparison of the participant's responses between the pre and post-surveys, which reveal an enhancement of information and education, the project appears to have been a success. Additionally, eighteen participants completed the pre-survey; sixteen completed the post-survey, yielding an 88.9% project completion rate. The high level of participation of the ten-week project shows the level of engagement the participants had in the project. The CBO and corporation partners were very excited about the project, as well. Therefore, it appears that this type of project can surely benefit the church, its membership, as well as the community at-large, to enhance the social equity of socially and economically

disadvantaged individuals. It may also be easily duplicated in other contexts to address inequities in those environments.

During the final close-out session, we took the opportunity to obtain further information from the participants that may provide concluding thoughts on the project. The questions were made available to the participants via Survey Monkey and could be completed on their own time. The questions, which were listed in the methodology section, requested feedback from the participants regarding the helpfulness of the workshops, life and social skills sessions, supportive services, as well as insight on "What other teachings or trainings would have been helpful?" "What session(s) would you change or do different?" We received feedback on the survey from eleven of the participants, and one of the participants forwarded me an email regarding their thoughts on the project, as a whole. The purpose and intent of these questions were to gain insight and feedback from the participants to help improve the program moving forward.

As mentioned in the methodology section of this chapter, each participant who signed-up to participate in the project was assigned a number from 1000-1021. There were twenty-two individuals who sign-up to participate in the project; however, only eighteen individuals attended the project kick-off and completed the pre-survey. In order to protect the confidentiality of the participants, I will highlight some of their individual comments via their identification number. Also, as previously mentioned, the CBO and corporation partners were asked questions regarding the helpfulness of the project to their entity, what would they do differently, and how they interacted with the participants. Eight partners responded to the questions.

In regard to the question for the participants, “What was most helpful about the “Finding Your Purpose” teaching session?” In summary, the responses included writing out your mission and goals to leave behind a legacy, practical application from scripture to action, direction and advice on narrowing scope, making a plan for life and business, finding out what I want to do, digging deep into their passion and what they were created for, finding focus and learning skills to help focus on purpose. There are few responses to this question that I’d like to designate to the responders, individually. Participant 1012 highlighted that the project helped them to be more focused on self-worth and God’s plan for the assignment He has on their life. Participant 1000 highlighted that the statement “your development determines your destiny,” on one of the handouts, really hit home. Participant 1018 stated that it provided a boost in confidence.

The next question was, “What was most helpful about the “Writing Your Vision” teaching session?” In summary, the responses included this session provided templates we could use to write our vision, having a foundation in scripture and presented with practical actionable steps was helpful, as well as it provided a written example of how to write your vision and make it easy to understand. Participant 1012 mentioned that the session allowed them to focus on vision and receive the responsibility greater than before. Participant 1000 highlighted that,

> Being reminded that God designed specifically for the task which He wanted us to complete while on earth. Knowing that He has already equipped us with everything that we need to be successful is something I have to constantly remind myself when I feel like I'm lacking. The greatest points from the lesson for me were 1. You know you're serving God from your heart when no one has to motivate you, you love what you're doing, and you're great at it.

Participant 1018 stated that the session provided a written example of how to write your vision and make it easy to understand. The participant continued with “learning to write it down in faith and believing it would happen.”

The third question was, “What was most helpful about the “Finishing What You Start” teaching sessions?” In summary, several responses highlighted that just knowing you have to finish what you started was helpful. Participant 1011 stated, “Don’t let life and set-backs get me off track.” Participant 1012 highlighted that this session gave them more obedience in reaching their goals and wanting to make sure everything is done correctly. Participant 1013 stated that, “until what I have set out to do is completed, then I have to keep going no matter what I face.” The participant continues with “I can’t give up and I can’t let go because I have purpose.”

The fourth question was, “What was most helpful about the “Living to Leave a Legacy” teaching session?” In summary, the participants highlighted that knowing what you leave behind matters, doing what you do is not just for yourself but for those impacted by their life, and one doesn’t want to leave their burdens. Participant 1000 states that, “This teaching session really shifted my thinking to realize that everything that I do is not just for me and will never only about me. Galatians 6:9 was helpful as well, knowing that if I faint not, in due season a just reward will be reaped.” Participant 1011 mentioned that they always focused on the spiritual, but the natural things of life are important as well. Participant 1018 stated, “I have kids and I want them to be better off than me and to be able to even carry on my legacy. This was the one of the most important lessons of the whole class. This is not something that is normally taught but it is important.”

The participants responded to “What was most helpful about the soft skills, life skills and technical skills training session?” In summary, the participants highlight a number of the skills addressed in the sessions were very helpful, such as communications, interpersonal, and emotional intelligence, as well as the technical skills were a great asset to the participants for their careers, calling, work and life. Participant 1016 highlighted how these sessions helped them become an effective leader. It appears that the participants favored these sessions, and they were beneficial in preparing the participants to stand out as a better employee, as mentioned by participant 1018.

In regard to, “What was most helpful about the supportive services and informational resource session?” The participants almost unilaterally concurred that the supportive services and informational resources enhanced their awareness of a wealth of resources available to them. It was very exciting to learn that through these sessions, participant 1016 began volunteering with Love, Inc.

Another inquiry that is essential for the project and the future program was, “What other teachings or trainings would have been helpful?” Most of the participants overwhelmingly mentioned finances, financial planning, budgeting or something to do with financial literacy. Other areas highlighted by some of the participants included mock interviews and computer skills. Participant 1001 stated that the trainings were perfect.

In regard to, “What session(s) would you change or do different?” Several participants mentioned that they would not change anything. However, participant 1000 would have liked to have seen the survey process be more efficient. Additionally, participant 1015 would have liked to have seen more one-on-one sessions with the

employers. Finally, participant 1003 would increase participant accountability by reviewing homework assignments.

Finally, participant 1013 submitted a follow-up email on Monday, November 4, 2019, with detailed thoughts regarding their involvement with the project (Appendix T). The participant highlighted how they were frustrated, feeling stagnant, and at a low and breaking point, when they considered joining the research project. They had also applied for several positions and had obtained first and second interviews, but they were not successful and was trying to stay afloat financially. They were depressed, burnt out discouraged and disappointed. However, they signed up to participate in the project, because they felt like they did not they have anything to lose. They mentioned that as the project was coming close to an end, they started to have a desire to begin applying for jobs, and they did receive a call for an interview. The participant concluded the email by thanking me for the design of the research and the desire from God to show the love of Christ not only to the congregation but also to the community. Based upon this participant's testimonial and many of the thoughts and ideas of the other participants, I am encouraged and excited to continue this essential program for the support of the disadvantaged community, in order to address inequities and motivate this community to aspire for a better quality of life.

Another avenue to collect final thoughts on the project, which might provide some "Best Practices" for future consideration, was to provide the partners an opportunity to share feedback on their experience with the participants and with the project. Therefore, as highlighted in the methodology, during the final week of the project, the partners were emailed a link to a Survey Monkey for them to provide

thoughts on questions regarding the helpfulness of the project for their entity, what would they do differently, and an evaluation of their interaction with the participants.

As previously mentioned, eight partners responded to the end of project evaluation. Seven of the partners responded that the project was helpful for their entity. The other partner responded, “Not yet.” James Whitt with the City of Columbia Supplier Diversity Program Development added that he enjoyed giving his presentation and interacting with the attendees. This appears to be sentiment of each presenter and partner. The sessions were very lively, engaging and interactive between the participants and partners. I believe this is reflected in the 88.9% project participation rate, as well.

In an attempt to gain insight from the partners on the overall strategy and implementation of the project, we also asked “What would they do differently?” Five of the partners, essentially, noted that things seemed to work well, and they would not change anything. Two of the partners shared that they would have liked to be more involved or would have liked to have engaged more with the participants to learn more about their interest. Alexces Bartley with the MOSourceLink stated that she would have liked to meet specifically with those interested in entrepreneurship or business ownership and take a deep dive. Although the strategy and implementation of project appears to have gone well, the sentiments of the partners provide insight to the need for more individual time between the participants and partners as the project grows and develops into a formal program.

We also asked the partners a few questions regarding their contact with the participants, including if any assistance had been provided, interviews held or if any of the participants had been hired by any of these entities. Seven of the partners had been

contacted by a participant, but one partner had not. Four of the partners had provided assistance to a participant or interviewed them, but four of the partners had not. Additionally, none of these eight partners had hired any of the participants.

During this final partner survey, we did ask the partners to provide any additional thoughts on the project. Jane Williams with Love, Inc. highlighted that the course was well organized and generated great enthusiasm. Additionally, as previously mentioned, one the participants accepted a volunteer position with Love, Inc. Two partners shared that they were thankful to be included in the project. James Whitt with the City of Columbia highlighted that this was an excellent program. Alexces Bartley with the MOSourceLink shared the project was "Great Work" and that she would like to see more of this program. Stacye Smith with Shelter Insurance highlighted that she gave two of the participants a tour of their facility and shared more about the opportunities with their corporation. She mentioned that she was hoping for the right position to come along for them in the coming months. Allen Jennings with Kelly Services requested that we continue to do the project, and Joe Weber with Kliethermes Homes and Remodeling did get an interviewee through networking with one of the other partners. Randy Minchew with DeLine Holdings stated that it was too soon for him to critique the project.

These comments from the partners provide a very revealing point that is necessary to mention at this time in the project review. Although this was a ten-week project, and there was a lot accomplished within this timeframe; however, in order to receive an exponential impact to change the complete trajectory of an individual's quality of life, it will take time. As a consequence, although it does not appear that any of the participants gained employment from the hiring corporations that partnered with the project, this is

not all bad news. The intent and purpose of this project was to enhance the "Social Equity" of these individuals. Therefore, as we have seen in these results and findings, there have been multiple enhancements for these participants and the partners in regard to relationships, resources, and increased awareness of the types of assistance available in the community to help individuals improve their quality of life. These types of life changes may take months and even years; however, in order to address these issues and concerns, someone has to be a change agent. I believe the church should surely be a part of the conversation, if not leading the conversation.

In conclusion, I would like to highlight a few points of the project by referencing a few revealing findings. Out of the eighteen participants who completed the "pre-survey," during the intake process, sixteen completed the "post-survey," yielding an 88.9% project participation rate. We believe this participation rate was achieved as a consequence of the overwhelming excitement of the participants. Additionally, the context associates and I remained in constant contact with the participants throughout the life of the project, face-to-face, and via phone, text message and email.

Consequently, I discern that the participants sincerely enjoyed the project and greatly appreciated the efforts taken to truly support their interests, passion and purpose. More so, the context associates and I were tremendously blessed to work together with the participants. I found the participants to be very hopeful, creative, and altruistic. As identified during the research, although these individuals may be considered disenfranchised or disadvantaged, the participants are very giving and caring. Their involvement in community service reveal how multifaceted, talented and giving these individuals really are, as well as, it shows how much of an asset any of these individuals

would be for any employer. All one needs is a chance to connect their passion to an opportunity, and as a consequence, one's social equity will be enhanced.

Nevertheless, based upon these findings, I determine that there was no significant change with the participants as a whole in regard to higher education, during the ten-week project. However, during the post-survey, one of the participants identified earning more than $94,000 annual; based upon a conversation with this individual, they did receive a salary increase during the project. The next highest earning of the participants identified is $55,000 per year. The average annual earnings for the participants evaluated during the post-survey was $37,148.65, compared to $35,671.68 identified in the pre-survey. This is a 4% increase in annual earnings for the participants, as a whole. This is a significant difference in economic and financial equity for the group as a whole from the beginning of the ten-week project. One participant responded that "just getting a job" would help them be successful.

As mentioned, in the pre-survey area of these findings, construction and trades were the least considered career option; however, in the post survey, this area is joined by maintenance, equipment operations and security. It is interesting that these are the lowest considered career options despite including a construction employer on the roster to speak with the participants. Supervision and management is now the highest selected career choice, as opposed to the health care industry. This is extremely encouraging, because it appears that the participant's capabilities and expectation of themselves increased.

In the post-survey, 56% of the participants reported they are currently earning money through a business endeavor, as opposed to 47% in the pre-survey. Is it my hope

that this increase was due to the exposure of the participants to the resources and presentations offered by collaboration partners such as James Whitt with the City of Columbia Supplier Diversity Program Development and Alexces Bartley with the MOSourceLink. Additionally, one of the participants expressed no hindrances with getting their business started.

During the post-survey, 47% of the participants reported being very familiar with social skills and 57% extremely familiar. The pre-survey results reveal that 71% were familiar with social skills, and only 18% were extremely familiar; whereas 12% were somewhat familiar with social skills. Consequently, it appears that these sessions drastically changed the familiarity of these participants with these important skills which should increase the preparedness of the participants to engage in gainful employment and be retained within any successful career option. It appears that all life and social skills resonated with the participants, because it appears that they are interested in continual improvement, personally and professional.

As mentioned, the partners were asked a number of questions. It was our hope that this survey would reveal some best practices, as well. The partners were asked, "What would you do differently?" The responses requested scheduling time to be more involved and to engage more of the participants to learn more about their interest and opportunities that they may want to pursue. Alexces Bartley with MOSourceLink mentioned that she would like to meet with those specifically interested in entrepreneurship and business ownership. Allen Jennings with Kelly Services thought the project would grow as the word gets out about the initiative. Therefore, I suggest that any

entity implementing a project similar to this one, should foster a significant amount of time for the participants to network with the partners.

Eighty-eight percent of the partners confirmed that they had been contacted by the participants. Another question posed to the partners inquired if any of the participants had been assisted or interviewed by their entity. Fifty percent of the entities responded “yes” to this inquiry, and fifty percent responded, “no.” However, none of the participants had been hired by any of the partners who responded to this survey. Therefore, an important observation to note is that although a participant’s “social equity” may have been enhanced through necessary connections and resources, it may take a considerable amount of time to yield tangible results.

The final question to the partners requested any additional comments or thoughts on the project. Jane Williams with Love, Inc., thought that the course was well organized and generated enthusiasm, and highlighted that one participant was now volunteering with their organization. Stayce Smith with Shelter Insurance mentioned that she met with two of the participants at Shelter Insurance to give them a tour and share more about their company and opportunities. She also mentioned that she was hoping for the right position to connect them with in the coming months. Stayce mentioned communicating via email with an additional participant, and that she enjoyed participating in the project and hoped to stay engaged.

Based upon the findings of the project, in order to continue bringing the necessary support to the underprivileged in our community, intentional collaboration is essential to individual success, but also to the wholistic improvement of an entire community. As addressed in the biblical foundations chapter, “all things common” had to do with

sharing, generosity and sincerity. This was an essential catalyst of change that created a "Cycle of Salvation" that leads to a "Cycle of Success." It all begins with those in the community having a heart for those in the community, and as a consequence, working together to foster a network of partners to create change and impact the lives of the least, the lost and those who have been left behind. This not just simply what Rauschenbusch calls the "Social Gospel," this is the Gospel perpetuated by the love of Christ, which becomes liberating for all.

Therefore, a network of intentionally collaborating entities working together will ensure that community concerns are improved and people's lives are enhanced. To this end, I suggest that a list of CBOs be compiled and identified, in order to assist with wholeness and wellness for an individual's success, as well as for addressing any other issues. One issue most often seen as a barrier a disadvantaged individual's continuing education or employment is transportation. Another issue of concern for this community is childcare. The further implementation of a collaboration program, such as this one, will need to bring awareness to the participants of other community resources, such as financial literacy and home ownership. Consequently, I intend to transition this project into a regular program through our church's community development corporation (CDC), the urban Empowerment Development Corporation. Additionally, through this CDC, I hope to assist other churches, communities and corporations with implementing similar programs in their areas.

Overall, the final project analysis reveals a triangulation of success gained in the "social equity" of the participants as a whole. First, the participants reveal an increase of awareness of their purpose, vision and commitment to fulfill the dreams granted to them

by God. Additionally, the participants gained information and education based upon the productivity of the workshops, life and social skills and supportive services shared during the training sessions. Secondly, the participants revealed a 4% increase in the financial equity, based upon an evaluation of the pre-and post-survey analysis of their annual incomes. Finally, the individual participants were benefactors of one of the greatest aspects of "social equity," the relationships gained with the partners, as well as between themselves, which could produce dividends for the remainder of one's life, if fostered.

In regard to best practices or lessons learned, although the strategy and implementation of the project appears to have gone well, the sentiments of the partners provide insight to the need for more individual time between the participants and partners as the project grows and develops into a formal program. Additionally, in order to foster relationships and facilitate intentional collaboration, program implementors must remain in constant contact with partners and participants face-to-face, via phone, text message and email. Any entity implementing a project similar to this one must allow for a significant amount of time for the participants to network with the partners. Finally, another important observation to note is that although a participant's "social equity" may have been enhanced through necessary connections and resources, it may take a considerable amount of time to yield tangible results.

The overall focus of this project was intended to enhance "social equity" and address economic inequalities. Therefore, I suggest an additional discipline within liberation theology is required to further investigate a theological perspective of economic injustices. This theological thought is the "Theology of Economic Equality and Equity." The intent behind this proposed liberation theology is to gain further biblical

insight on systemic economic disparities within this postmodern society and how to further address them.

APPENDIX A

CONTEXT ASSOCIATES RESUMES

SHANNON A. WILSON, JD, MBA, CAPM
2700 Comstock Dr
Columbia, MO. 65202
Shannon.ue3@gmail.com
(573) 673-5308

Objective: To successfully advance my career in executive project/program management in a way that is mutually beneficial to myself and my employer and which effectively utilizes my education and experience

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Education: Master of Business Administration - William Woods University
Juris Doctorate – William H. Bowen School of Law
Bachelor of Arts, English - University of Arkansas at Little Rock

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Relevant Experience:

Service Delivery Management

- Manage incident, problem, change and security systems identity and access
- Manage internal and external resource unit and service level agreement analysis and reporting
- Lead Agile squads as First Line Leader
- Encourage the use of Agile tools and methodologies
- Manage outcomes, data analytics, strategic planning
- Responsible for governance
- Manage client satisfaction, face to face interaction with clients
- Manage client expectation and problem escalations

Project Management

- Manage medium and complex projects utilizing Agile methodology
- Facilitate client facing meetings
- Effectively manage finances, human resources, scope and time
- Develop, implement and maintain training and coaching materials
- Develop, implement and maintain process and procedure documents
- Security Policy Coordination

Economic Development

- Network with program participants and stakeholders
- Provide reporting to board
- Manage purchases of real and commercial property
- Manage development and renovation of properties
- Raise funds through capital campaigns

Relevant Employment:

Service Delivery Manager, IBM 2017 to Present

Project Manager, IBM Continual

Executive Director, uEDC (non-profit) 2009 to Present

Community Involvement: **Volunteer**, Network for Emerging Women Leaders (NEW)
Volunteer, Show Me State Games
Volunteer, United Way
Volunteer, urban Empowerment Development Corporation

D'Andre Thompson
1326 Ashland Rd Apt. H, Columbia Missouri 65201
(734) 274-1667
dandrethompson14@gmail.com

EDUCATION

University of Missouri, Columbia, MO
Bachelors of Science in General Arts
Major: **General Studies** December, 2014
Minor: **Business**
BBSA (Black Business Student Association) F all 2012 –Fall 2014
SPRTA (Student Parks, Recreation and Tourism Association) Fall 2013 –Fall 2014

Columbia College, Columbia, MO
Major: **Master of Business Administration** January, 2018

Academic Honors
Dean's List 6 semesters

WORK EXPERIENCE

Senior Enrollment Service Center Specialist
Columbia College, Columbia, MO December, 2014— Present
- Assist all students within the Columbia College network which includes Day, Evening, Online, Nationwide and Graduate studies with financial aid inquires, registration inquires, and account based inquires in an efficient manner.
- Provide prompt and excellent customer service while maintaining extensive knowledge on the Department of Education financial aid regulations.

Student Employee
Rollins Dining Hall, Columbia, MO January, 2013 –December, 2014
- Properly prepared meals in a safe and professional environment.
- Performed assigned duties in a safe manner without any discrepancies.

Baggage Claim/ Ramp Agent
Delta Airlines, Detroit, MI July, 2014 –August, 2014
- Successfully load customer baggage onto multiple aircraft by following proper baggage loading procedures.
- Assisted other ramp agents in transferring baggage from attendant's carousel to agent carousel.

RELATED EXPERIENCE

Vice-Chairman
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee Columbia College, Columbia, MO July, 2016—Present
- Work collectively with committee members to cultivate diversity and inclusion initiatives to improve college climate.
- Serve on the Executive Board for the committee and illustrate an engaged commitment for relevant initiatives

Youth Facilitator/ Financial Volunteer
Urban Empowerment Ministries, Columbia, MO February, 2016 ——Present
- Facilitate teen ministry events through community involvement.
- Monitor church finances with the assistance of core finance team lead.

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE INVITATION LETTERS

Lester Woods, Jr
P.O. Box 85
Columbia, MO. 65205

August 4, 2019

Ms. Jane Williams:

I am reaching out to you to open a dialogue about an opportunity to collaborate to assist our fellow community members. I am working on my Doctor of Ministry project, which is "A COLLABORATION MODEL THAT ENHANCES THE SOCIAL EQUITY OF SOCIALLY AND ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED INDIVIDUALS AT URBAN EMPOWERMENT MINISTRIES". My theme has to do with leveraging the nexus or potential connection between community-based organizations, churches and business to assist individuals with becoming employed or better employed. To that end, I hope that your organization would be willing to assist in a few ways listed below.

1. Provide information about any existing programs that assist potential employees to become gainfully/more gainfully employed. For example, upskilling, job coaching/training, job fairs or other community partnerships/collaborations.
2. Attendance at one or both Kick-Off meetings to learn about the offering and meet me, my staff and participants. Meetings will be 8/27 and 8/29 at 2404 N. Stadium, 65202.
3. Attendance at one or more gatherings intended to educate community members about ways they may improve their chances at gainful employment, employer expectations and potential employment opportunities. 9/3, 9/5, 9/10, and 9/12 at 2404 N. Stadium, 65202.
4. Attendance and participation at one or more gatherings intended to network with community-based organizations to improve employment opportunities. 9/17, 9/19, 9/24 and 9/26 at 2404 N. Stadium, 65202.

I will follow up this letter with a call within the next week to discuss details of the request, solidify the dates/times of your participation, and work toward building a network to better the employment opportunities in our community. Any participation is voluntary and at your convenience and discretion. Thank you for your time and I look forward to speaking with you in person next week.

Kindest Regards,

Lester Woods, Jr., Senior Pastor
Urban Empowerment Ministries
LesterWoodsJr@gmail.com
(573) 823-9679 cell

Lester Woods, Jr
P.O. Box 85
Columbia, MO. 65205

August 4, 2019

Ms. Stacye Smith:

I am reaching out to you for information and assistance. I am working on my Doctor of Ministry project which is "A COLLABORATION MODEL THAT ENHANCES THE SOCIAL EQUITY OF SOCIALLY AND ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED INDIVIDUALS AT URBAN EMPOWERMENT MINISTRIES. My theme has to do with leveraging the nexus or potential connection between community-based organizations, churches and business to assist individuals with becoming employed or better employed. To that end, I hope that your business would be willing to assist in a few ways listed below.

1. Provide the company's EEI (Employee Expectation Identification) or the minimal expectations for potential employees.
2. Provide information about any existing programs the company engages in to assist potential employees or present employees to become gainfully/more gainfully employed. For example, upskilling, job coaching/training, job fairs or other community partnerships/collaborations.
3. Attend one or both Kick-Off meetings to learn about the offering and meet me, my staff and participants. Meetings will be 8/27 and 8/29 at 2404 N. Stadium, 65202.
4. Attend one or more gatherings intended to educate community members about ways they may improve their chances at gainful employment, employer expectations and potential employment opportunities. 9/3, 9/5, 9/10, and 9/12 at 2404 N. Stadium, 65202.
5. Attend one or more gatherings intended to network with community-based organizations. 9/17, 9/19, 9/24 and 9/26 at 2404 N. Stadium, 65202.

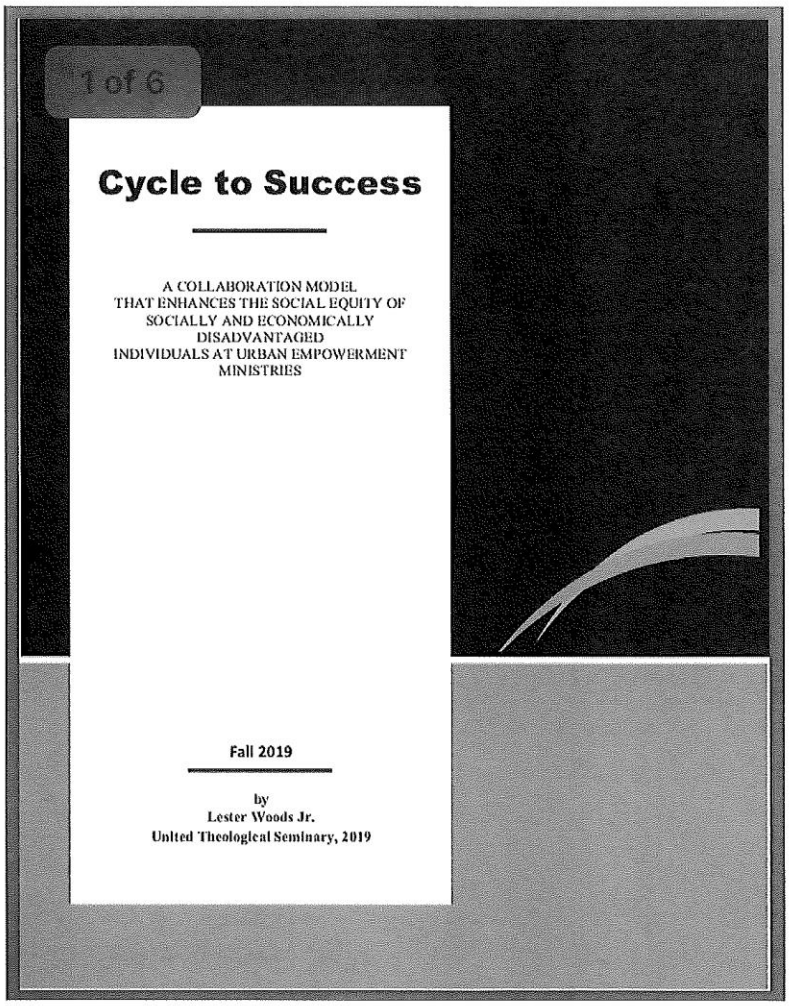
I will follow up this letter with a call within the next week to discuss details of the request, solidify the dates/times of your participation, and work toward building a network to better the employment opportunities in our community. Any participation is voluntary and at your convenience and discretion. Thank you for your time and I look forward to speaking with you in person next week.

Kindest Regards,

Lester Woods, Jr., Senior Pastor
Urban Empowerment Ministries
LesterWoodsJr@gmail.com
(573) 823-9679 cell

APPENDIX C

KICK OFF MEETING HANDOUT


1 of 6
Cycle to Success
A COLLABORATION MODEL
THAT ENHANCES THE SOCIAL EQUITY OF
SOCIALLY AND ECONOMICALLY
DISADVANTAGED
INDIVIDUALS AT URBAN EMPOWERMENT
MINISTRIES
Fall 2019
by
Lester Woods Jr.
United Theological Seminary, 2019

Implied Consent Letter for Survey

Participant Recruitment Statement

PURPOSE OF STUDY:
The purpose of this project is to determine if prophetic leadership may provide spiritual empowerment to individuals through awareness and foster collaboration between the church, Community Based Organizations (CBOs), and corporations to enhance the social equity of members at Urban Empowerment Ministries, resulting in a better quality of life. This concern will be addressed through spiritual encouragement for individuals and facilitating intentional collaboration with CBOs for supportive services and corporations for employment. The goal is to reveal how collaboration between churches, communities, and corporations may address social justice concerns such as those in education, employment, and entrepreneurship, and as a consequence, close the "Social Equity" gap within socio-economically disadvantaged communities. Consequently, the theme is "A Collaboration Model that Enhances the Social Equity of Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Individuals at Urban Empowerment Ministries."

SELECTION PROCESS:
In order to determine if these collaborative efforts may address social equity issues within Urban Empowerment Ministries and yield tangible results, volunteers are needed to engage in this study. This project will be an eight-week study between August 27th and October 31st, 2019. Volunteers will be invited to answer questions regarding their education and employment interest, as well as personal questions regarding their financial status. The eight-week study will include several evening educational and information sessions, as well as interviews with potential employers.

BENEFITS AND PARTICIPATION:
The ultimate goal for the participant is gainful employment that may increase their financial status and foster a better quality of life. Volunteers may opt out of the project at any time. If you are interested in volunteering in this project as a participant, please contact me at lwoods1@aunited.edu.

PAYMENT/COMPENSATION FOR PARTICIPATION:
You will not be compensated for participation in this research study.

CONFIDENTIALITY:
Your anonymity is completely assured during this research, as no identifying information is recorded during this survey. Any information that is obtained in connection with this study that could possibly associated with you will remain confidential and will only be disclosed with your permission or as required by law.

Agenda

Tuesday August 26th, 2019 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Prayer	Bishop Lester Woods, Jr.
Welcome	Bishop Lester Woods, Jr.
Introductions	Community Partners Community Participants
Project Overview	Bishop Lester Woods, Jr.
Project Schedule	Bishop Lester Woods, Jr.
Questions & Discussion	Community Partners Community Participants
Complete Surveys	Community Participants
Dismissal	Associates Team Bishop Lester Woods, Jr.

Welcome & Thank you to Community Based Organizations Present:

Love INC
United Community Builders

3

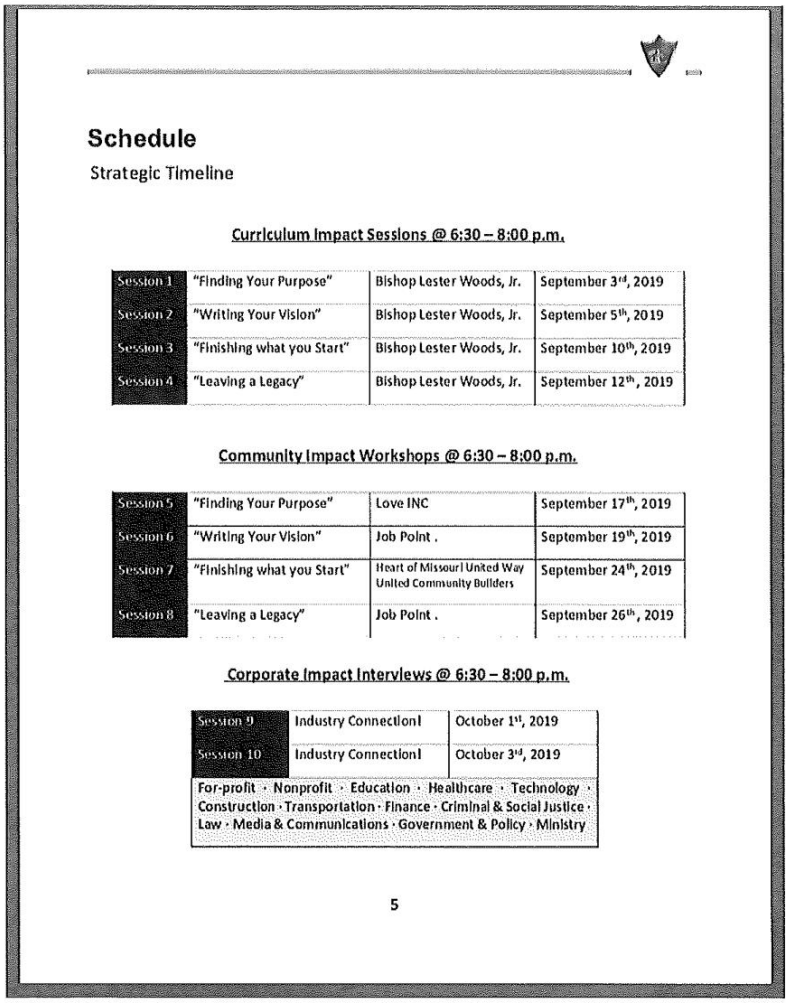
Agenda

Thursday August 29th, 2019 6:30– 8:00 p.m.

Prayer	Bishop Lester Woods, Jr.
Welcome	Bishop Lester Woods, Jr.
Introductions	Community Partners Community Participants
Project Overview	Bishop Lester Woods, Jr.
Project Schedule	Bishop Lester Woods, Jr.
Questions & Discussion	Community Partners Community Participants
Complete Surveys	Community Participants
Dismissal	Associates Team Bishop Lester Woods, Jr.

Welcome & Thank you to Community Based Organizations Present:

Job Point
Heart of Missouri United Way



Schedule

Strategic Timeline

Curriculum Impact Sessions @ 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Session 1	"Finding Your Purpose"	Bishop Lester Woods, Jr.	September 3rd, 2019
Session 2	"Writing Your Vision"	Bishop Lester Woods, Jr.	September 5th, 2019
Session 3	"Finishing what you Start"	Bishop Lester Woods, Jr.	September 10th, 2019
Session 4	"Leaving a Legacy"	Bishop Lester Woods, Jr.	September 12th, 2019

Community Impact Workshops @ 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

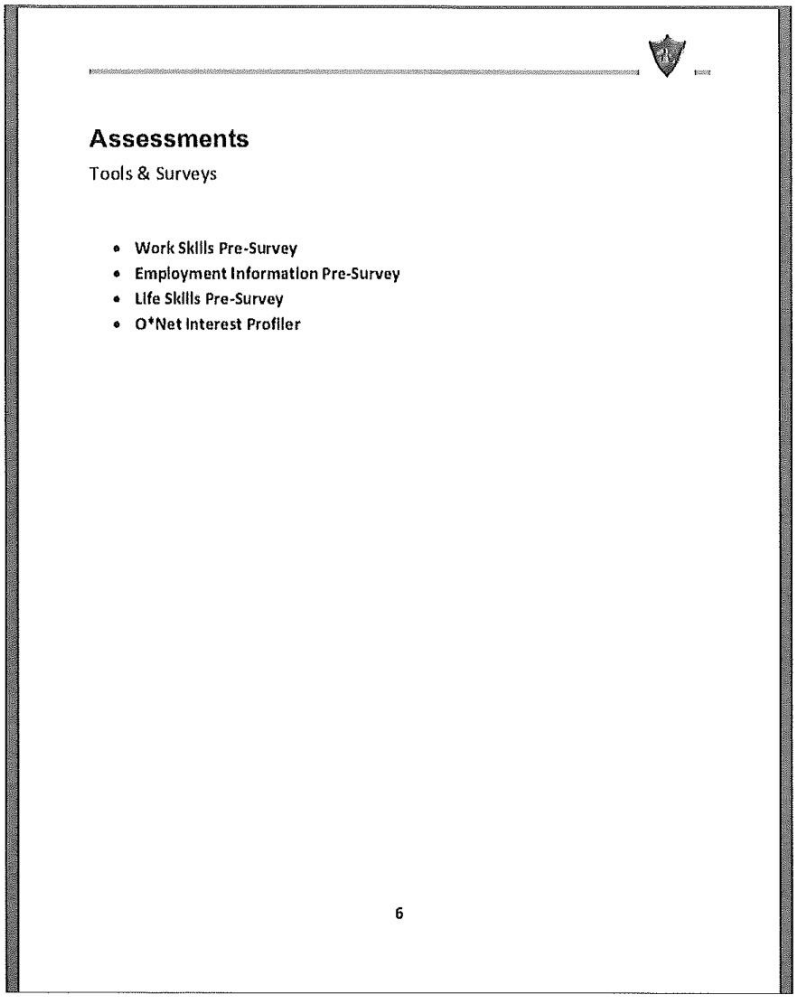
Session 5	"Finding Your Purpose"	Love INC	September 17th, 2019
Session 6	"Writing Your Vision"	Job Point .	September 19th, 2019
Session 7	"Finishing what you Start"	Heart of Missouri United Way United Community Builders	September 24th, 2019
Session 8	"Leaving a Legacy"	Job Point .	September 26th, 2019

Corporate Impact Interviews @ 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Session 9	Industry Connection!	October 1st, 2019
Session 10	Industry Connection!	October 3rd, 2019

For-profit · Nonprofit · Education · Healthcare · Technology · Construction · Transportation · Finance · Criminal & Social Justice · Law · Media & Communications · Government & Policy · Ministry

5



Assessments

Tools & Surveys

- Work Skills Pre-Survey
- Employment Information Pre-Survey
- Life Skills Pre-Survey
- O*Net Interest Profiler

6

APPENDIX D

O*NET INTEREST PROFILER SHORT FORMS

SCORE REPORT

O*NET Interest Profiler Short Form
Career Starter

Name: _____

Congratulations on completing your O*NET Interest Profiler! Interest Areas are a summary of the type of work you like. Now you will:

- Learn about your work interests;
- Discover careers linked to your interests that you might find satisfying and rewarding;
- Explore careers that match your interests based on job preparation level; and
- Experience hands-on activities relating to your career interest choices.

Primary (1), Second (2), and Third (3) Interests

Copy below the three Interests from the bottom of your Interest Profiler. Remember the Interest with the highest score (most number of checks) is your **Primary Interest**.

Primary Interest: 1 _____

Second and Third Interests: 2 _____ 3 _____

What do your Interests mean?

RIASEC Interests

Realistic:	People with **Realistic** interests like work activities that include practical, hands-on problems and answers. They like working with plants and animals, and real-world materials, like wood, tools, and machinery. They enjoy outside work.
Investigative:	People with **Investigative** interests like work that has to do with ideas and thinking rather than physical activity or leading people. They like to search for facts and figure out problems.
Artistic:	People with **Artistic** interests like work that deals with the artistic side of things, such as acting, music, art, and design. They like creativity in their work and work that can be done without following a set of rules.
Social:	People with **Social** interests like working with others to help them learn and grow. They like working with people more than working with objects, machines, or information. They like teaching, giving advice, and helping and being of service to people.
Enterprising:	People with **Enterprising** interests like work that has to do with starting up and carrying out business projects. These people like taking action rather than thinking about things. They like persuading and leading people, making decisions, and taking risks for profit.
Conventional:	People with **Conventional** interests like work that follows set procedures and routines. They prefer working with information and paying attention to detail rather than working with ideas. They like working with clear rules and following a strong leader.

What is Your Job Zone?

To figure out what careers to explore, it's helpful to know how much education, training, and experience you need to do a job. This level of preparation is known as a **Job Zone**. Careers that require similar levels of preparation are grouped into the same Job Zone. To explore careers, you will need to choose a **Job Zone** that you plan on working towards in the future.

Job Zone 1 — Careers need ***Little*** or ***No*** Preparation

- **No previous skills, knowledge, or experience is needed.**
  - May require a high school diploma or GED certificate.
  - May need from a few days to a few months of training.

Job Zone 2 — Careers need ***Some*** Preparation

- **Usually need a high school diploma.**
  - Some previous skills, knowledge, or experience is usually needed.
  - May need from a few months to one year of working with experienced employees.

Job Zone 3 — Careers need ***Medium*** Preparation

- **Usually requires training in vocational schools, related on–the-job experience, or an associate's degree.**
  - Previous skills, knowledge, or experience needed.
  - Need one or two years of training.

Job Zone 4 — Careers need ***High*** Preparation

- **Most careers require a four-year bachelor's degree, but some do not.**
  - Long-term skills, knowledge, or experience needed.
  - Need several years of work-related experience and training.

Job Zone 5 — Careers need ***Extensive*** Preparation

- **Most of these careers need a graduate school education.**
  - Extensive skills, knowledge, and experience are needed; many requiring more than five years of experience.
  - May need some on-the-job training; however, the person will usually have the needed skills, knowledge, work-related experience, and training before starting the job.

Pick a **Job Zone** from above that matches the education, training, and experience you plan on getting in the **FUTURE.** Careers in **higher** Job Zones often pay more and offer more opportunities. Learn about the type of careers that can match your interests in the **FUTURE!**

FUTURE Job Zone: _____

Exploring Careers Using Your Interests and Your Job Zone:

Using your **Primary Interest** and **Job Zone** allows you to find careers that match your interests and fit your amount of job preparation. The ***O*NET Career Listings*** document shows careers for each Interest and Job Zone.

1. Find your Primary Interest and look over the careers listed.

2. Find your Job Zone under your Primary Interest and review the careers listed. Do you see any careers that you would like to find out more about? Write down the Career Title for each career you want to explore. **On the next page, an O*NET Careers Worksheet is provided to write these titles down.**

3. Now that you have selected careers to explore, go to My Next Move at: https://www.mynextmove.org/. Search careers with keywords or to browse careers by industry. For each career, you can find:

- the types of activities that are performed in those careers;
- the knowledge, skills, abilities, technology, and education that are needed for the careers;
- job postings, training, certification, and apprenticeship information for the careers;
- state-level employment statistics for the careers; and
- the wages and future employment outlook that are predicted for the careers.

4. To find more career choices related to your interests not in your list, go to the Interest Browse function within My Next Move at **https://www.mynextmove.org/find/interests**.

5. If you don't like the careers in your Job Zone listed for your Primary Interest, you have choices:

- Review the Job Zone definitions to make sure that you have chosen the Job Zone that best matches what you have now.
- Choose a different Job Zone that you want to work towards in the FUTURE.
- Use your second or third highest interests to look at careers.

Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment & Training Administration and developed by the National Center for O*NET Development

O*NET CAREER LISTINGS

O*NET Careers by Interest and Job Zone

REALISTIC | JOB ZONES 1 – 2

*People with **Realistic** interests like work activities that include practical, hands-on problems and answers. They like working with plants and animals, and real-world materials, like wood, tools, and machinery. They enjoy outside work.*

REALISTIC — JOB ZONE 1 *(Little or No Preparation Needed)*

O*NET Career Title	O*NET Career Title
Cement Masons & Concrete Finishers	Helpers--Painters, Paperhangers, Plasterers, & Stucco Masons
Cooks, Fast Food	Hunters & Trappers
Counter Attendants, Cafeteria, Food Concession, & Coffee Shop	Landscaping & Groundskeeping Workers
Derrick Operators, Oil & Gas	Laundry & Dry-Cleaning Workers
Dining Room & Cafeteria Attendants & Bartender Helpers	Logging Equipment Operators
Dishwashers	Meat, Poultry, & Fish Cutters & Trimmers
Farmworkers & Laborers, Crop	Nonfarm Animal Caretakers
Farmworkers, Farm, Ranch, & Aquacultural Animals	Plasterers & Stucco Masons
Fishers & Related Fishing Workers	Roustabouts, Oil & Gas
Food Preparation Workers	Septic Tank Servicers & Sewer Pipe Cleaners

REALISTIC — JOB ZONE 2 *(Some Preparation Needed)*

O*NET Career Title	O*NET Career Title
Ambulance Drivers & Attendants	Laborers & Freight, Stock, & Material Movers, Hand
Animal Trainers	Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers
Bicycle Repairers	Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners
Construction Carpenters	Manicurists & Pedicurists
Construction Laborers	Medical Equipment Preparers
Cooks, Restaurant	Refuse & Recyclable Material Collectors
Earth Drillers	Security Guards
Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	Solar Photovoltaic Installers
Helpers--Electricians	Stock Clerks- Stockroom, Warehouse, or Storage Yard
Janitors & Cleaners	Weatherization Installers & Technicians

**The career was assigned to the group based on its second highest interest.
***The career was assigned to the group based on its third highest interest.

REALISTIC | Job Zones 3 - 5

REALISTIC — JOB ZONE 3 *(Medium Preparation Needed)*

O*NET Career Title	O*NET Career Title
Audio & Video Equipment Technicians	Medical Appliance Technicians
Barbers	Pipe Fitters & Steamfitters
Computer User Support Specialists	Plumbers
Construction & Building Inspectors	Radiologic Technologists
Electrical Power-Line Installers & Repairers	Refrigeration Mechanics & Installers
Elevator Installers & Repairers	Security & Fire Alarm Systems Installers
Endoscopy Technicians	Solar Thermal Installers & Technicians
Heating & Air Conditioning Mechanics & Installers	Surgical Technologists
Maintenance & Repair Workers, General	Surveying Technicians
Medical & Clinical Laboratory Technicians	Veterinary Technologists & Technicians

REALISTIC — JOB ZONE 4 *(Considerable Preparation Needed)*

O*NET Career Title	O*NET Career Title
Aerospace Engineering & Operations Technicians	Geological Sample Test Technicians
Airline Pilots, Copilots, & Flight Engineers	Manufacturing Engineers
Automotive Engineers	Museum Technicians & Conservators
Biological Technicians	Precision Agriculture Technicians
Cartographers & Photogrammetrists	Remote Sensing Technicians
Civil Engineers	Security Management Specialists
Computer Network Support Specialists	Solar Energy Systems Engineers
Electrical Engineering Technologists	Surveyors
Environmental Engineering Technicians	Transportation Engineers
Foresters	Wind Energy Engineers

REALISTIC — JOB ZONE 5 *(Extensive Preparation Needed)*

O*NET Career Title	O*NET Career Title
Anesthesiologist Assistants	Molecular & Cellular Biologists**
Athletic Trainers**	Nanosystems Engineers**
Computer & Information Research Scientists**	Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeons
Dentists, General**	Orthotists & Prosthetists**
Environmental Engineers**	Radiologists**
Environmental Restoration Planners**	Remote Sensing Scientists & Technologists
Farm & Home Management Advisors**	Set & Exhibit Designers**
Fuel Cell Engineers	Soil & Plant Scientists**
Human Factors Engineers & Ergonomists**	Surgeons**
Microsystems Engineers**	Veterinarians**

**The career was assigned to the group based on its second highest interest.
***The career was assigned to the group based on its third highest interest.

INVESTIGATIVE | Job Zones 1 – 3

*People with **Investigative** interests like work that has to do with ideas and thinking rather than physical activity or leading people. They like to search for facts and figure out problems.*

INVESTIGATIVE — JOB ZONE 1 ***(Little or No Preparation Needed)***

O*NET Career Title	O*NET Career Title
Derrick Operators, Oil & Gas***	Logging Equipment Operators**

INVESTIGATIVE — JOB ZONE 2 ***(Some Preparation Needed)***

O*NET Career Title	O*NET Career Title
Animal Breeders**	Medical Equipment Preparers***
Bicycle Repairers***	Metal-Refining Furnace Operators & Tenders**
Brickmasons & Blockmasons***	Millwrights***
Construction Carpenters***	Non-Destructive Testing Specialists**
Dental Laboratory Technicians**	Operating Engineers & Other Construction Equipment Operators***
Dietetic Technicians**	Recreational Vehicle Service Technicians**
Earth Drillers**	Reinforcing Iron & Rebar Workers***
Explosives Workers, Ordnance Handling Experts, & Blasters**	Riggers***
Insulation Workers, Mechanical***	Rough Carpenters***
Lathe & Turning Machine Tool Setters, Operators, & Tenders, Metal & Plastic**	Structural Iron & Steel Workers**

INVESTIGATIVE — JOB ZONE 3 ***(Medium Preparation Needed)***

O*NET Career Title	O*NET Career Title
Audio & Video Equipment Technicians**	Histotechnologists & Histologic Technicians**
Chemical Technicians	Industrial Engineering Technicians
Computer Numerically Controlled Machine Tool Programmers, Metal & Plastic**	Medical & Clinical Laboratory Technicians**
Computer User Support Specialists**	Nuclear Medicine Technologists
Coroners	Paralegals & Legal Assistants**
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	Quality Control Analysts**
Elevator Installers & Repairers**	Registered Nurses**
Emergency Medical Technicians & Paramedics**	Respiratory Therapists**
Fire Investigators	Veterinary Technologists & Technicians**
Hearing Aid Specialists**	Web Developers**

**The career was assigned to the group based on its second highest interest.
***The career was assigned to the group based on its third highest interest.

INVESTIGATIVE | Job Zones 4 - 5

INVESTIGATIVE — JOB ZONE 4 ***(Considerable Preparation Needed)***

O*NET Career Title	O*NET Career Title
Atmospheric & Space Scientists	Marine Architects
Biomedical Engineers	Marine Engineers
Business Intelligence Analysts	Market Research Analysts & Marketing Specialists
Cytogenetic Technologists	Medical & Clinical Laboratory Technologists
Environmental Science & Protection Technicians, Including Health	Network & Computer Systems Administrators
Environmental Scientists & Specialists, Including Health	Occupational Health & Safety Specialists
Forensic Science Technicians	Petroleum Engineers
Geodetic Surveyors	Software Developers, Applications
Geoscientists	Software Developers, Systems Software
Industrial Engineers	Water Resource Specialists

INVESTIGATIVE — JOB ZONE 5 ***(Extensive Preparation Needed)***

O*NET Career Title	O*NET Career Title
Allergists & Immunologists	Nurse Anesthetists
Audiologists	Operations Research Analysts
Biostatisticians	Optometrists
Dermatologists	Orthodontists
Dietitians & Nutritionists	Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Physicians
Family & General Practitioners	Physicists
Financial Quantitative Analysts	Psychiatrists
Human Factors Engineers & Ergonomists	School Psychologists
Management Analysts	Sports Medicine Physicians
Mathematicians	Veterinarians

**The career was assigned to the group based on its second highest interest.
***The career was assigned to the group based on its third highest interest.

ARTISTIC | Job Zones 1 – 3

*People with **Artistic** interests like work that deals with the artistic side of things, such as acting, music, art, and design. They like creativity in their work and work that can be done without following a set of rules.*

ARTISTIC — JOB ZONE 1 ***(Little or No Preparation Needed)***

O*NET Career Title
Models

ARTISTIC — JOB ZONE 2 ***(Some Preparation Needed)***

O*NET Career Title	O*NET Career Title
Actors	Public Address System & Other Announcers***
Childcare Workers**	Sewers, Hand**
Floral Designers	Shoe & Leather Workers & Repairers***
Furniture Finishers**	Singers
Glass Blowers, Molders, Benders, & Finishers***	Stone Cutters & Carvers, Manufacturing**
Nannies**	Tile & Marble Setters***

ARTISTIC — JOB ZONE 3 ***(Medium Preparation Needed)***

O*NET Career Title	O*NET Career Title
Camera Operators, Television, Video, & Motion Picture**	Jewelers**
Chefs & Head Cooks***	Makeup Artists, Theatrical & Performance
Cooks, Private Household	Merchandise Displayers & Window Trimmers
Craft Artists	Music Composers & Arrangers
Dancers	Musical Instrument Repairers & Tuners**
Desktop Publishers	Photographers
Fashion Designers	Preschool Teachers**
Film & Video Editors	Self-Enrichment Education Teachers**
Fine Artists, Including Painters, Sculptors, & Illustrators	Sound Engineering Technicians**
Hairdressers, Hairstylists, & Cosmetologists	Tailors, Dressmakers, & Custom Sewers**

**The career was assigned to the group based on its second highest interest.
***The career was assigned to the group based on its third highest interest.

ARTISTIC | Job Zones 1 – 3

*People with **Artistic** interests like work that deals with the artistic side of things, such as acting, music, art, and design. They like creativity in their work and work that can be done without following a set of rules.*

ARTISTIC — JOB ZONE 1 ***(Little or No Preparation Needed)***

O*NET Career Title
Models

ARTISTIC — JOB ZONE 2 ***(Some Preparation Needed)***

O*NET Career Title	O*NET Career Title
Actors	Public Address System & Other Announcers***
Childcare Workers**	Sewers, Hand**
Floral Designers	Shoe & Leather Workers & Repairers***
Furniture Finishers**	Singers
Glass Blowers, Molders, Benders, & Finishers***	Stone Cutters & Carvers, Manufacturing**
Nannies**	Tile & Marble Setters***

ARTISTIC — JOB ZONE 3 ***(Medium Preparation Needed)***

O*NET Career Title	O*NET Career Title
Camera Operators, Television, Video, & Motion Picture**	Jewelers**
Chefs & Head Cooks***	Makeup Artists, Theatrical & Performance
Cooks, Private Household	Merchandise Displayers & Window Trimmers
Craft Artists	Music Composers & Arrangers
Dancers	Musical Instrument Repairers & Tuners**
Desktop Publishers	Photographers
Fashion Designers	Preschool Teachers**
Film & Video Editors	Self-Enrichment Education Teachers**
Fine Artists, Including Painters, Sculptors, & Illustrators	Sound Engineering Technicians**
Hairdressers, Hairstylists, & Cosmetologists	Tailors, Dressmakers, & Custom Sewers**

**The career was assigned to the group based on its second highest interest.
***The career was assigned to the group based on its third highest interest.

SOCIAL | Job Zones 1 – 3

*People with **Social** interests like working with others to help them learn and grow. They like working with people more than working with objects, machines, or information. They like teaching, giving advice, and helping and being of service to people.*

SOCIAL — JOB ZONE 1 ***(Little or No Preparation Needed)***

O*NET Career Title	O*NET Career Title
Counter Attendants, Cafeteria, Food Concession, & Coffee Shop**	Food Servers, Nonrestaurant
Dining Room & Cafeteria Attendants & Bartender Helpers***	

SOCIAL — JOB ZONE 2 ***(Some Preparation Needed)***

O*NET Career Title	O*NET Career Title
Ambulance Drivers & Attendants**	Lifeguards, Ski Patrol, & Other Recreational Protective Service Workers**
Bus Drivers, Transit & Intercity**	Locker Room, Coatroom, & Dressing Room Attendants
Childcare Workers	Nannies
Crossing Guards	Nursing Assistants
Customer Service Representatives**	Personal Care Aides
Dietetic Technicians	Physical Therapist Aides
Forest Firefighters**	Psychiatric Aides
Funeral Attendants	Public Address System & Other Announcers
Home Health Aides	Ushers, Lobby Attendants, & Ticket Takers
Hosts & Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, & Coffee Shop**	Waiters & Waitresses

SOCIAL — JOB ZONE 3 ***(Medium Preparation Needed)***

O*NET Career Title	O*NET Career Title
Acute Care Nurses	Occupational Therapy Assistants
Concierges	Physical Therapist Assistants
Critical Care Nurses	Preschool Teachers
Dental Hygienists	Radiation Therapists
Emergency Medical Technicians & Paramedics	Registered Nurses
Fitness Trainers & Aerobics Instructors	Residential Advisors
Hearing Aid Specialists	Self-Enrichment Education Teachers
Licensed Practical & Licensed Vocational Nurses	Speech-Language Pathology Assistants
Massage Therapists	Teacher Assistants
Medical Assistants	Tour Guides & Escorts

**The career was assigned to the group based on its second highest interest.
***The career was assigned to the group based on its third highest interest.

SOCIAL | Job Zones 4 - 5

SOCIAL — JOB ZONE 4 *(Considerable Preparation Needed)*

O*NET Career Title	O*NET Career Title
Adapted Physical Education Specialists	Informatics Nurse Specialists
Career/Technical Education Teachers, Secondary School	Kindergarten Teachers
Child, Family, & School Social Workers	Middle School Teachers
Coaches & Scouts	Midwives
Community Health Workers	Patient Representatives
Education Administrators, Preschool & Childcare Center/Program	Probation Officers & Correctional Treatment Specialists
Elementary School Teachers	Recreation Workers
Emergency Management Directors	Special Education Teachers, Secondary School
Equal Opportunity Representatives & Officers	Training & Development Specialists
Health Educators	Tutors

SOCIAL— JOB ZONE 5 *(Extensive Preparation Needed)*

O*NET Career Title	O*NET Career Title
Arbitrators, Mediators, & Conciliators	Marriage & Family Therapists
Area, Ethnic, & Cultural Studies Teachers, Postsecondary	Mental Health Counselors
Athletic Trainers	Nurse Midwives
Chiropractors	Nurse Practitioners
Counseling Psychologists	Occupational Therapists
Genetic Counselors	Physical Therapists
Healthcare Social Workers	Physician Assistants
Hospitalists	Psychology Teachers, Postsecondary
Instructional Coordinators	Speech-Language Pathologists
Law Teachers, Postsecondary	Substance Abuse & Behavioral Disorder Counselors

**The career was assigned to the group based on its second highest interest.
***The career was assigned to the group based on its third highest interest.

ENTERPRISING | Job Zones 1 – 3

*People with **Enterprising** interests like work that has to do with starting up and carrying out business projects. These people like taking action rather than thinking about things. They like persuading and leading people, making decisions, and taking risks for profit.*

ENTERPRISING — JOB ZONE 1 *(Little or No Preparation Needed)*

O*NET Career Title	O*NET Career Title
Amusement & Recreation Attendants	Counter & Rental Clerks**
Baristas	Counter Attendants, Cafeteria, Food Concession, & Coffee Shop***
Bridge & Lock Tenders***	Door-To-Door Sales Workers, News & Street Vendors, & Related Workers
Cement Masons & Concrete Finishers**	Food Servers, Nonrestaurant***
Combined Food Preparation & Serving Workers, Including Fast Food***	Models**

ENTERPRISING — JOB ZONE 2 *(Some Preparation Needed)*

O*NET Career Title	O*NET Career Title
Aircraft Cargo Handling Supervisors	Food Service Managers
Bartenders	Gaming Supervisors
Customer Service Representatives	Hosts & Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, & Coffee Shop
Demonstrators & Product Promoters	Mates- Ship, Boat, & Barge
Farm Labor Contractors	Parts Salespersons
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation & Serving Workers	Recycling Coordinators
First-Line Supervisors of Helpers, Laborers, & Material Movers, Hand	Retail Loss Prevention Specialists
First-Line Supervisors of Housekeeping & Janitorial Workers	Retail Salespersons
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	Telemarketers
First-Line Supervisors of Transportation & Material-Moving Machine & Vehicle Operators	Waiters & Waitresses**

ENTERPRISING — JOB ZONE 3 *(Medium Preparation Needed)*

O*NET Career Title	O*NET Career Title
Administrative Services Managers	Morticians, Undertakers, & Funeral Directors
Airfield Operations Specialists	Municipal Fire Fighting & Prevention Supervisors
Chefs & Head Cooks	Opticians, Dispensing
Customs Brokers	Private Detectives & Investigators
First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades & Extraction Workers	Real Estate Sales Agents
First-Line Supervisors of Landscaping, Lawn Service, & Groundskeeping Workers	Sheriffs & Deputy Sheriffs
First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, & Repairers	Ship & Boat Captains
First-Line Supervisors of Office & Administrative Support Workers	Skincare Specialists
First-Line Supervisors of Personal Service Workers	Solar Energy Installation Managers
Flight Attendants	Spa Managers

**The career was assigned to the group based on its second highest interest.
***The career was assigned to the group based on its third highest interest.

ENTERPRISING | Job Zones 4 - 5

ENTERPRISING — JOB ZONE 4 *(Considerable Preparation Needed)*

O*NET Career Title	O*NET Career Title
Business Continuity Planners	Marketing Managers
Clinical Research Coordinators	Meeting, Convention, & Event Planners
Computer & Information Systems Managers	Online Merchants
Construction Managers	Personal Financial Advisors
Financial Managers, Branch or Department	Producers
Fitness & Wellness Coordinators	Property, Real Estate, & Community Association Managers
Fraud Examiners, Investigators & Analysts	Public Relations & Fundraising Managers
General & Operations Managers	Social & Community Service Managers
Insurance Sales Agents	Sustainability Specialists
Loan Counselors	Training & Development Managers

ENTERPRISING — JOB ZONE 5 *(Extensive Preparation Needed)*

O*NET Career Title	O*NET Career Title
Administrative Law Judges, Adjudicators, & Hearing Officers	Education Administrators, Postsecondary
Architectural & Engineering Managers	Instructional Designers & Technologists
Business Teachers, Postsecondary**	Investment Fund Managers
Chief Executives	Judges, Magistrate Judges, & Magistrates
Chief Sustainability Officers	Lawyers
Clergy**	Management Analysts**
Clinical Nurse Specialists	Medical & Health Services Managers
Curators	Natural Sciences Managers
Distance Learning Coordinators	Treasurers & Controllers**
Education Administrators, Elementary & Secondary School	Urban & Regional Planners**

**The career was assigned to the group based on its second highest interest.
***The career was assigned to the group based on its third highest interest.

CONVENTIONAL | Job Zones 1 – 3

*People with **Conventional** interests like work that follows set procedures and routines. They prefer working with information and paying attention to detail rather than working with ideas. They like working with clear rules and following a strong leader.*

CONVENTIONAL — JOB ZONE 1 ***(Little or No Preparation Needed)***

O*NET Career Title	O*NET Career Title
Amusement & Recreation Attendants**	Fallers**
Baristas**	Food Preparation Workers**
Bridge & Lock Tenders**	Graders & Sorters, Agricultural Products**
Combined Food Preparation & Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	Grinding & Polishing Workers, Hand**
Conveyor Operators & Tenders**	Helpers--Painters, Paperhangers, Plasterers, & Stucco Masons**
Cooks, Fast Food**	Landscaping & Groundskeeping Workers**
Counter & Rental Clerks	Laundry & Dry-Cleaning Workers**
Derrick Operators, Oil & Gas**	Nonfarm Animal Caretakers**
Dining Room & Cafeteria Attendants & Bartender Helpers**	Rock Splitters, Quarry**
Dishwashers**	Sewing Machine Operators**

CONVENTIONAL — JOB ZONE 2 ***(Some Preparation Needed)***

O*NET Career Title	O*NET Career Title
Billing, Cost, & Rate Clerks	Marking Clerks
Cargo & Freight Agents	Office Clerks, General
Cashiers	Order Fillers, Wholesale & Retail Sales
Costume Attendants	Orderlies
Court Clerks	Police, Fire, & Ambulance Dispatchers
Freight Forwarders	Receptionists & Information Clerks
Hotel, Motel, & Resort Desk Clerks	Shipping, Receiving, & Traffic Clerks
Insurance Policy Processing Clerks	Slot Supervisors
Interviewers	Statement Clerks
Library Assistants, Clerical	Stock Clerks, Sales Floor

CONVENTIONAL — JOB ZONE 3 ***(Medium Preparation Needed)***

O*NET Career Title	O*NET Career Title
Assessors	Medical Secretaries
Bookkeeping, Accounting, & Auditing Clerks	Ophthalmic Medical Technicians
Computer Numerically Controlled Machine Tool Programmers, Metal & Plastic	Paralegals & Legal Assistants
Dental Assistants	Pharmacy Technicians
Energy Auditors	Phlebotomists
Insurance Claims Clerks	Quality Control Analysts
Loan Interviewers & Clerks	Secretaries & Administrative Assistants
Loan Officers	Surgical Assistants
Mapping Technicians	Tax Preparers
Medical Records & Health Information Technicians	Web Developers

**The career was assigned to the group based on its second highest interest.
***The career was assigned to the group based on its third highest interest.

CONVENTIONAL | Job Zones 4 - 5

CONVENTIONAL — JOB ZONE 4 *(Considerable Preparation Needed)*

O*NET Career Title	O*NET Career Title
Accountants	Financial Analysts
Actuaries	Geophysical Data Technicians
Audio-Visual & Multimedia Collections Specialists	Information Security Analysts
Auditors	Logistics Analysts
Clinical Data Managers	Regulatory Affairs Specialists
Compliance Managers	Risk Management Specialists
Cost Estimators	Sales Representatives, Wholesale & Manufacturing
Database Administrators	Social & Human Service Assistants
Document Management Specialists	Statistical Assistants
Environmental Compliance Inspectors	Web Administrators

CONVENTIONAL — JOB ZONE 5 *(Extensive Preparation Needed)*

O*NET Career Title	O*NET Career Title
Archivists	Investment Fund Managers**
Bioinformatics Scientists**	Judicial Law Clerks
Biostatisticians**	Librarians
Chief Executives**	Mathematicians**
Chief Sustainability Officers**	Medical & Health Services Managers**
Curators**	Operations Research Analysts**
Distance Learning Coordinators**	Pharmacists**
Economists**	Statisticians
Education Administrators, Postsecondary**	Survey Researchers**
Financial Quantitative Analysts**	Treasurers & Controllers

Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment & Training Administration & developed by the National Center for O*NET Development

**The career was assigned to the group based on its second highest interest.
***The career was assigned to the group based on its third highest interest.

APPENDIX E

CAPACITY INVENTORY QUESTIONNAIRE



Please complete Inventory Identifiers:
Please Check: ___CBO or __Corporation
Name of CBO/CORP:
_____

Community Based Organization (CBO) and Corporate Survey
Capacity Inventory Questionnaire

1. **Please provide your company's minimal expectation for employees.**

2. **Please provide information about your organization's recruitment practices.**

3. **Please provide information on your company's recruitment practices.**

4. **Please provide any other information that you can about your company/organization.**

APPENDIX F

WORKSHOP HANDOUT I

A Collaboration Model that Enhances the Social Equity of Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Individuals at Urban Empowerment Ministries

Finding Your Purpose-Workshop Session 1
Tuesday, September 3, 2019

Ephesians 1:10 That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:
11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:

I. Introduction

What do you think you're on earth for?_____.

II. You Are Not An Accident
Isaiah 44:2; Jeremiah 29:11

Your parents may not have planned you, but God did!

Where can you see the hand of God in your life that has brought you to where you are in life _____.

Nothing in your life is arbitrary. It's all for a purpose.

III. See Life from God's View
Romans 12:2

The way you see your life SHAPES Your life.

How do you see your life? _____.

Your development determines your destiny.

What has been the greatest influence on your life? _____.

IV. Accepting Your Assignment

1. _____,
2. _____,
3. _____,
4. _____.

Rick Warren, The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth am I here For? (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012)

V. Service and Significance

God wants to use you to make a difference in his world.

OTHER NOTES:

APPENDIX G

WORKSHOP HANDOUT II

A Collaboration Model that Enhances the Social Equity of Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Individuals at Urban Empowerment Ministries

Writing Your Vision-Workshop Session 2
Thursday, September 5, 2019

Ephesians 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

I. Introduction

Whenever God gives us an assignment, he always equips us with what we need to accomplish it.

This custom combination of capabilities is called your SHAPE.
Spiritual Gifts
Heart
Abilities
Personality
Experience

II. SHAPE: Unwrap Your Spiritual Gifts
I Corinthians 2:14-15

You can't earn your spiritual gifts or deserve them—that's why they are called gifts.

When we use our gifts, everyone wins.

III. SHAPE: Listen to Your Heart
Proverbs 27:19

The heart represents the source of all your motivations.

You know when you're serving God from your heart:
1. Your Enthusiasm_____.
2. Your Effectiveness _____.

IV. SHAPE: Apply Your Abilities
Exodus 31:3-5

1. _____,
2. _____,
3. _____,

Rick Warren, The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth am I here For? (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012)

V. SHAPE: Use Your Personality
I Corinthians 12:6

Your personality will affect how and where you use your spiritual gifts and abilities.

When you operate in your personality God gave you, you experience fulfillment, satisfaction and fruitfulness.

VI. SHAPE: Employ Your Experiences

In determining your shape for serving God, you should examine at least six kinds of experience from your past:

1. _____,
2. _____,
3. _____,
4. _____,
5. _____,
6. _____.

Using your shape is the secret to both fruitfulness and fulfillment.

What would hinder you from finding your SHAPE?_____.

Other Notes

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Assignment
Write Your Personal Mission Statement
Work on Your Life Plan

APPENDIX H

WORKSHOP HANDOUT III

A Collaboration Model that Enhances the Social Equity of Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Individuals at Urban Empowerment Ministries

Finishing What You Started-Workshop Session 3
Tuesday, September 10, 2019

Philippians 1:6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

I. Introduction

Living on Purpose is the only way to really live. Everything else is just existing.

Most people struggle with three basic issues in life.

1. _____,
2. _____,
3. _____.

Proverbs 19:21 Many are the plans in a person's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails.

II. Purpose Statement

A Life's Purpose Statement:

1. _____,

2. _____,

3. _____,

4. _____.

III. Life 's Five Greatest Questions

1. _____,

2. _____,

3. _____,

4. _____,

5. _____.

Rick Warren, The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth am I here For? (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012)

Mission Statement Template:

My purpose in life is to _____,

_____,

and _____,

in order to _____.

Other Notes

Rick Warren, The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth am I here For? (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012)

APPENDIX I

WORKSHOP HANDOUT IV

A Collaboration Model that Enhances the Social Equity of Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Individuals at Urban Empowerment Ministries

Leaving a Legacy-Workshop Session 4
Thursday, September 12, 2019

Proverbs 13:22 A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children: and the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just.

I. Introduction

What is Legacy?

_____
_____
_____
_____

II. Legacy Necessity

Your Legacy is a Necessity for:

1. _____,
_____
_____

2. _____,
_____
_____

3. _____,
_____
_____

4. _____,
_____
_____

III. Cycle of Salvation

1. _____,
2. _____,
3. _____,
4. _____.

Rick Warren, The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth am I here For? (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012)

APPENDIX J

LIFE SKILLS SESSION HANDOUT I

A Collaboration Model that Enhances the Social Equity of Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Individuals at Urban Empowerment Ministries

Life Skills Session I
Tuesday, September 17, 2019

Proverbs 18:20-21(NLT)
"Wise words satisfy like a good meal; the right words bring satisfaction. [21]The tongue can bring death or life; those who love to talk will reap the consequences."

I. Do you have effective communication skills?

Communication is a two-way process.

1. Sender: _____

2. Receiver: _____

Good communication skills can improve your way of life and strengthen relationships.

Bad communication skills can disrupt relationships and prevent solutions from being discovered.

II. Interpersonal skills are delivered in various ways.
Ephesians 4:2-3 (NLT)
"Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love. [3]Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace."

1. Verbal Communication: This skill is about what you _____, and how your get your _____ across.

2. Non-Verbal Communication: This involves _____, _____, _____, _____, _____, and even _____ to convey a message.

3. Listening: This is an imperative skill that involves _____. In order for any relationship to be successful there must be intentionality while listening otherwise disputes can stagnate progress.

Interpersonal skills are necessary when working with groups so there must be a clear focus on ensuring that both sides work toward common ground. Barriers in communication may sometimes exist but that should not prevent any steps toward a resolution.

APPENDIX K

LOVE INC. RESOURCES

Love in the Name of Christ of Columbia, Missouri

Job Search Assistance in Columbia

Columbia Area Career Center
573-214-3803
4203 S. Providence Road
Columbia, MO 65203
Contact adulted@cpsk12.org
The Career Center helps with career counseling and has many educational courses that can help you get the expertise you need for a job in a certain field.

COMO Youth Works
1002 Fay Street Columbia MO 65201
(573)-256-1896
yezemail@gmail.com
Provides job search and readiness, connection to employers and employment mentoring to 14-24 year old individuals.

The Job Center
800 Cherry St
Columbia, MO
(573) 441-6361
https://jobs.mo.gov/contact-information/
The Job Center can help you find a job or get job training from their website. They also host regular job fairs.

Jobs for Life
(573)-256-7662
www.jobsforlife.org
Love INC is collaborating with several local churches and organizations to bring this nationally recognized program to Columbia. Participants will gain new vision for their life and career, receive job readiness instruction and networking opportunities and be paired with a mentor. Watch for program dates to be announced or call Love INC for more information.

Job Point
(573) 474-8560
Fax: (573) 474-8575
400 Wilkes Boulevard
Columbia, MO 65201-4340
Contact Steve Smith at steves@jobpointmo.org
http://www.jobpointmo.com/
Job Point will help you find a job or help you keep the one you have by providing career counseling and job placement assistance. Job Point offers assessment and guidance to determine individual potential and a realistic career plan.

Love in the Name of Christ of Columbia, Missouri

Love INC
1516 Business Loop 70 W
Columbia, MO 65202
(573) 256-7662
www.columbialoveinc.org/
Love INC provides individual job search coaching for those who are unable to access other programs or who are involved in our programs. Ask about Jobs for Life programs that are held periodically by local churches. The Jobs for Life job search/readiness instruction and mentoring program will be available in 2019. Love INC is collaborating with local churches and businesses to host this eight week program for the unemployed and underemployed of central Missouri.

SkillUP
855-278-0354
Contact at skillup@missouri.edu.
The SkillUP program is free and offers SNAP recipients in Missouri the opportunity to gain skills, training or work experience. SkillUP offers a variety of services to participants based on an Individual Employment Plan which is created between the participant and SkillUP staff. These services include staff assisted job search, job search training, work-based learning, vocational training, education, and supportive services. You can access SkillUP through the Job Center, the University of Missouri, and some community colleges in the Springfield and Kansas City areas. You can find classes offered in central Missouri on the SkillUP website at http://skillup.missouri.edu/centralregion.htm.

Vet Center
573-814-6206
4040 Rangeline Road
Columbia, MO 65202
Offers employment guidance for US military veterans.

Vocational Rehabilitation
573-751-3251
info@vr.dese.mo.gov
https://dese.mo.gov/adult-learning-rehabilitation-services/vocational-rehabilitation/
VOC rehab provides employment services and supported employment.
VR clients may be eligible to receive services or training through the following agencies that provide job search and job coaching:

Job Point: as stated above

MORE Group: Missouri Rehabilitation and Employment Group (MORE Group) provides employment services to persons with disabilities seeking to enter the workforce. They offer expertise in employment services, vocational counseling, human resources, psychometric testing and benefits planning.

Love in the Name of Christ of Columbia, Missouri

ACT: ACT provides job preparation services, job discovery and exploration services, job development services, and job support for people with disabilities.

Choices for People: provides career exploration and one on one evaluation to help create a successful outcome for each individual. A job development plan is created, taking into account information from the evaluation as well as job supports if needed. Job retention, employer/employee relationship and job support are focused on by the program.

Love INC provides a list of employers frequently hiring in the following categories: care providers, labor jobs, nursing homes and cleaning services.

1516 Business Loop 70 W
Columbia, MO 65202
Docs/resources/employment/jobsearchassistanceincolumbia

Phone: 573.256.7662
office@columbialoveinc.org

Updated 07/18/2018

Love in the Name of Christ of Columbia, Missouri

JANITORIAL

Atkins Cleaning Service - 573-874-5100
1123 Wilkes Blvd, Suite 450
Columbia, MO 65201

Casa Bonita House Cleaning, LLC – 573-489-6814
102 Westridge Dr
Columbia, MO 65203
casabonita@gmail.com

A-Z Janitorial Services - 573-607-9087
203 Pinewood Dr
Columbia MO 65203

Handy Helper and Helping Hands - 573-474-8745
670 Cherry St
Columbia MO 65203

ISS Facility Services/BG Service Solutions - 573-874-8000
730 Sexton Rd
Columbia MO 65201

Merry Maids – 573-203-4045
601 Business Loop 70 W, Ste #154
Columbia, MO 65203

Personal Touch Cleaning Service - 573-256-1920
3600 S Rolling Hills Rd
Columbia, MO 65201

Safi Sana - 573-529-6378
9030 Lake Meadows Way
Columbia, MO 65203
Safisana.jennifer@gmail.com
Specializes in hiring refugees and disadvantaged

Love in the Name of Christ of Columbia, Missouri

Tiger Maids - 573-445-9999
1206 Business Loop 70 W, Ste G
Columbia MO 65203

Sunshine Cleaning Service LLC – 573-499-0333
pat@sunshinecleaningcolumbia.com

Maid Pro – 573-303-5248
3211 Providence Rd, Ste 109
Columbia MO 65203

Blakemore Cleaning & Restoration – 573-442-7745
601 Business Loop 70 W, Ste 137A
Columbia, MO

Love in the Name of Christ of Columbia, Missouri

CAR WASHING & DETAILING SERVICES

Columbia Mall Car Wash -573-445-1116
2203 W. Worley St. Columbia, MO 65203
May hire with a record.

Tiger Express Wash – 573-256-2601
212 Nebraska Ave. 65203
2601 Grindstone Pkwy. 65201
3715 Sandman Ln. 65201
May hire with record.

Gaines Car Detailing – 573-499-4634
1401 Illinois Ave #C
May hire with a record.

Columbia Detailing – 573-268-3295
1402 Man O War Dr. Columbia, MO 65202
Columbiadetailing.com
Leave a message to find out information regarding jobs.

Castle Car Wash – 573-449-4373
3919 Peachtree Dr., Columbia , MO 65203

Rangeline Car Wash – 573-817-1472
911 Dinwiddie Cir Columbia, MO 65202

Oakland Plaza Car & Truck Wash – 573-474-7065
2000 Vandiver Rd. Columbia, MO 65202

Also try car dealerships for detailing jobs, etc.

APPENDIX L

UNITED COMMUNITY BUILDERS POWERPOINT

United Community Builders

"Helping People Like You"

UCB's History

- For over 30 years United Community Cathedral (UCC) has walked along side individuals and families on their journey from poverty to gainful employment.
- In 2009 United Community Builders (UCB) was formed to further extend UCC's community outreach services to the Mid-Missouri Region.

Our Mission

- The mission of UCB is to build and release capable people.

Mission driven

UCB accomplishes its mission through 6 Tiers of Programming:

- Club Kid Connect Youth Academy & Tutoring (CKC)
- Weekend With The Boys Mentoring Program (WWTB)
- Focus on Fatherhood
- Transformation Program
- Actors of Faith
- United Community School House

Student Focus

Building and Releasing Capable Students through afterschool programs, tutoring, and the summer youth academy.

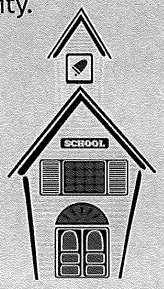
CKC

- Academic Hour Power
  - Student receive instructional learning in mathematics and reading comprehension.
- Nature exploration Camp
  - Student receive hand on learning of life sciences through nature exploration.
  - Instructional learning is provided by volunteers from the US fish and wildlife service
- Positive youth development
- Fun summer activities (bowling, swimming, skating)

Club Kid Connect
Summer Youth Academy
"Helping People Like You"

United Community School House (UCSH)

- UCSH is a before and afterschool program for students attending Columbia Public Schools.
- UCSH provides services for Pre-K to 5th grade students.
- We strive to bridge the gaps between home, school, and community.
- UCSH is an expansion of our CKC program.



CKC



Nature Camp experience



Safe environment



Fun Summer Activities

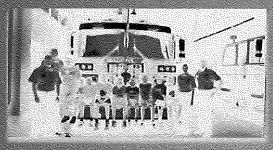
Mentorship

Building and Releasing Capable young men through mentorship.

Weekend With The Boys Mentoring Program (WWTB)

- WWTB is committed to building and strengthening character traits that will produce a healthy lifestyle in young boys.
- The program strives to address negative behavioral issues, strengthened critical thinking skills, increase healthy peer relationships, and encouraging transformational change in our youth.
- WWTB sessions also include fun leisure time activities.

WWTB





Character
- Building young men

Family
- Healthy Peer Relationships

Fun
- Mentor's who care

Focus on Fatherhood

Building and Releasing Capable Fathers through parenting education.

Focus on Fatherhood

- Provide a framework for understanding the role of the father
- Address the systemic barriers to fathering
- And to provide training in specific skills to become the father his child needs.



Employment Readiness Training

Building and Releasing capable employees through job readiness training and life coaching.

Transformation Program

- Transformation is a faith-based job readiness training program for individuals entering or re-entering the workforce. The project's purpose is to teach and train individuals that are unemployed and underemployed to find and maintain meaningful employment.
- Phase 1:
  - Life skills and Self-Worth Development.
- Phase 2:
  - Employment Readiness Training.

Transformation
Changing Lives. One at a Time.

Transformation





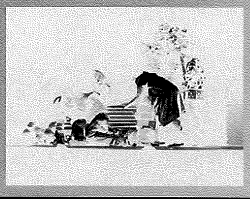
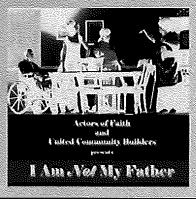
Knowledge Insight Empowerment

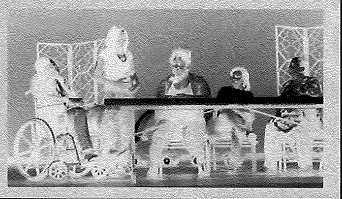
Community Enrichment

Building and Releasing Capable stage productions that engage and inspire social, cultural, and community awareness.

Actors of Faith

- AOF is a community theatre group that is dedicated to bringing performing art programs to individuals of diverse ages, races, and cultural backgrounds. AOF strives to create and present original theatre productions that engage and inspire social, cultural and community awareness.



APPENDIX M

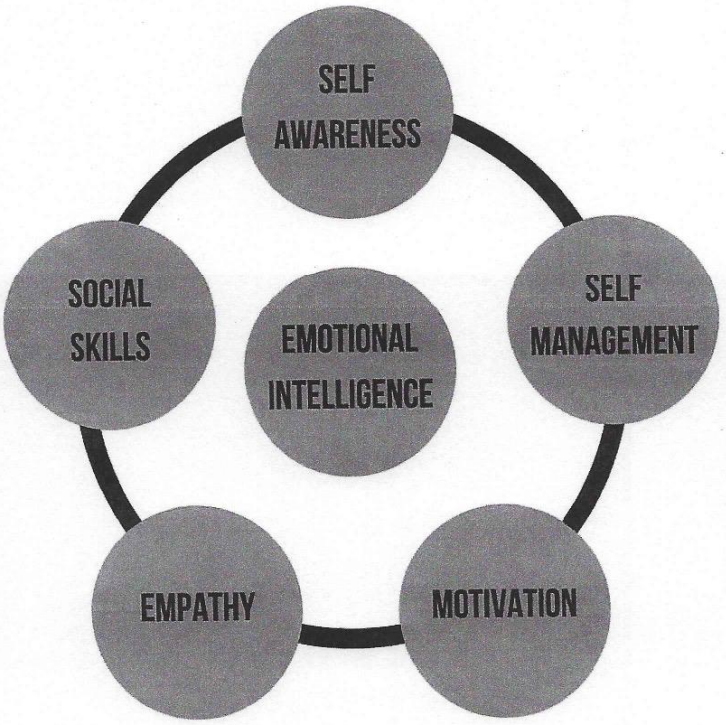
LIFE SKILLS SESSIONS HANDOUT II

EQ Leveraging Emotional Intelligence

emotional intelligence is the key to both personal and professional success

2 Peter 1:5-7 King James Version (KJV)
5 And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;
6 And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;
7 And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.

Galatians 5:22-23 King James Version (KJV)
22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,
23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.



Self-awareness: _____

_____

_____

Self-management: _____

_____

Johari Window Model (Joseph Luften & Harry Ingham) **toolshero**


Known to self
Unknown to self
Known to others
Unknown to others
Open
Things that are known by you and also seen and acknowledged by others
Blind
Things that are unknown by you but seen and acknowledged by others
Hidden
Things that are known by you but unknown by others
Things that are unknown by you and also unknown by others

www.toolshero.com

Motivation: _____

Empathy: _____

Social Skills: _____

Perception: _____

5 ways to develop, enhance and grow your emotional intelligence so you may continue to build and maintain healthy relationships for the future.

1. Observe how you feel, react and behave

Try taking a moment to see how you react to the world around you. If someone is upsetting you, what do you say or do? If someone makes a joke, how do you respond? Are you able to manage your emotions or do they take over you?

Do your emotions impact your day and how you communicate with those around you and your overall well-being? How often does your mood change? It's important to ask these questions and answer them so you have an understanding of what your overall emotional state is.

2. Take responsibility for your emotions, feelings and behavior

This is possibly the most challenging step, but it's also the most helpful. Your behavior, reactions and emotions come from you and you alone. No one can make you feel a certain way unless you permit it. You are responsible for how you respond, react and behave.

When you take responsibility for how you feel and behave, your perspective changes and it can make a positive impact on all areas of your life.

3. Know your stressors

Discover what makes you annoyed, angry or sad. If you know your stress points, you're more likely to respond well when the time comes that you feel frustrated. Take control and limit what gives you stress or anger. For example, if you know that checking your work email before going to bed will make you anxious or worried, leave it and check it when you arrive at the office the next morning.

4. Rise up from adversity

Challenges, failures and plot-twists are all a part of life. How you react and bounce back from those challenges are what will determine your emotional intelligence. Observe how you feel and respond to certain challenges – do you complain more than you should? Try positive thinking to counteract such negative thoughts. Emotional intelligence is about understanding your emotions and learning to be agile during intense situations.

5. Practice empathy

There is a difference between sympathy and empathy. Sympathy is feeling compassion or sorrow for another person's hardships/circumstance. While empathy is the ability to put yourself in the shoes of another person and act on it. Empathy is much deeper than sympathy and that's why it's a main component for emotional intelligence.

When you're able to listen, visualize and understand what a person is going through, you may be able to have a better interaction with them.

Get along with people (Read the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People by Stephen Covey)

-Be Proactive
-Begin with the End in Mind
-Put First Things First
-Think Win-Win
-Seek First to Understand and then to be Understood
-Synergize
-Sharpen the Saw

Actively Listen: _____

Effectively Communicate: _____

Draw out the beliefs and values of others.

Show others that they belong.

To be an effective leader/manager/peer motivator/change facilitator:
An effective leader facilitates a conversation to reveal the truth whether the information is good or bad.
An effective leader helps people to think for themselves, take responsibility and be accountable.
An effective leader's goal is to help others be a part of the process. People need to express themselves. People need to participate in the change.

"You do <u>NOT</u> inspire anyone by showing them how amazing you are. You inspire them by showing them how amazing they are. Show people how amazing they are and they will amaze you even more."

Emotionally intelligent change facilitators know how to manage the emotions of others. The goal is to lead with facts and information rather than emotion (ie their own or the uncontrolled emotions of others).

APPENDIX N

COVER LETTERS AND RESUME HANDOUT

Cover Letters & Resumes

1. What is a Cover Letter and what purpose does it serve?
    a. A Cover Letter is one way to help introduce yourself
    b. It is memorable
    c. It is personal
    d. When done correctly it has the specific information of the HR resource you are targeting (DO NOT PUT To Whom It May Concern!)
    e. It allows you to elaborate on information that may be in your resume
    f. It allows you to include information that may not be in your resume
    g. It allows you to direct the reader's attention
    h. It shows you have done your research
    i. It shows you plan to follow up
    j. It allows you to provide your follow up information and the information of your references.
    k. It is unique and sets you apart from other applicants

2. What is a resume?
    a. An abbreviated self-marketing/branding tool that sums up the qualifications of the person seeking the job.
    b. A resume is used to advertise oneself and his or her qualities that align with the job for which he/she is applying.
    c. Should be 1 or 2 pages
    d. Clear
    e. Concise
    f. Easy to read and understand

3. Are the multiple types of resumes?
    a. Yes. There are four basic types.
        i. Chronological – the most common type. Work history is listed in order by descending date (meaning your most recent work history at the top). Should reflect all work history if less than 20 years. Should reflect at least the last 10 to 15 years. Include internships and volunteer work. Also include education and skills. Employers expect and prefer the chronological resume.
        ii. Functional – the second most common type. Many employers do not like this resume type because they immediately expect that employment history is missing. The goal of the functional resume is to focus on skills and to de-

emphasize gaps in work history due to raising a family, illness, or job loss.

iii. Combination – the combination resume highlights skills and work experience. It is usually used when you are applying for a job where you want to show your skills, degrees, certifications and experience.

iv. Targeted – a targeted resume is customized to the position you want. The information you provide specifically align with the job description you want. You study the job description and you look for ways to align your skills to the requirements.

APPENDIX O

INVITATIONS TO EMPLOYERS

From: **Lester Woods, Jr.** lesterwoodsjr@gmail.com
Subject: Collaboration Project for Career Opportunities
Date: September 21, 2019 at 5:30 PM
To: lmmccaulley@ccis.edu
Cc: Shannon Wilson shannon.ue3@gmail.com, Whittley Jones whittley.y.j@gmail.com, D'Andre Thompson dandrethompson14@gmail.com, Lester Woods, Jr. lwoods1@united.edu



Hello Ms. Michelle McCaulley,

My name is Lester Woods and I am the Senior Pastor of Urban Empowerment Ministies, Columbia, Missouri.

I am working on a doctoral project, focusing on how collaborative relationships between churches and corporations may provide employment opportunities for disadvantaged individuals. The project began a few weeks ago with workshops, life skills sessions and supportive services presentations to prepare individuals for gainful employment. There are about 15 individuals participating in the project.

On Tuesday, October 1st, and Thursday, October 3rd, we are asking employers to share their firm's employment opportunities with these participants and discuss their hiring processes. These sessions will held at Urban Empowerment Ministries, 2402 Industrial Drive, Columbia, Missouri, at 6:30pm.

Let me know if your organization may be willing and available to participate in this project.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions. Thanks.

Lester Woods, Jr.
Doctor of Ministry-Student
LesterWoodsJr@gmail.com
(573) 823-9679 cell

APPENDIX P

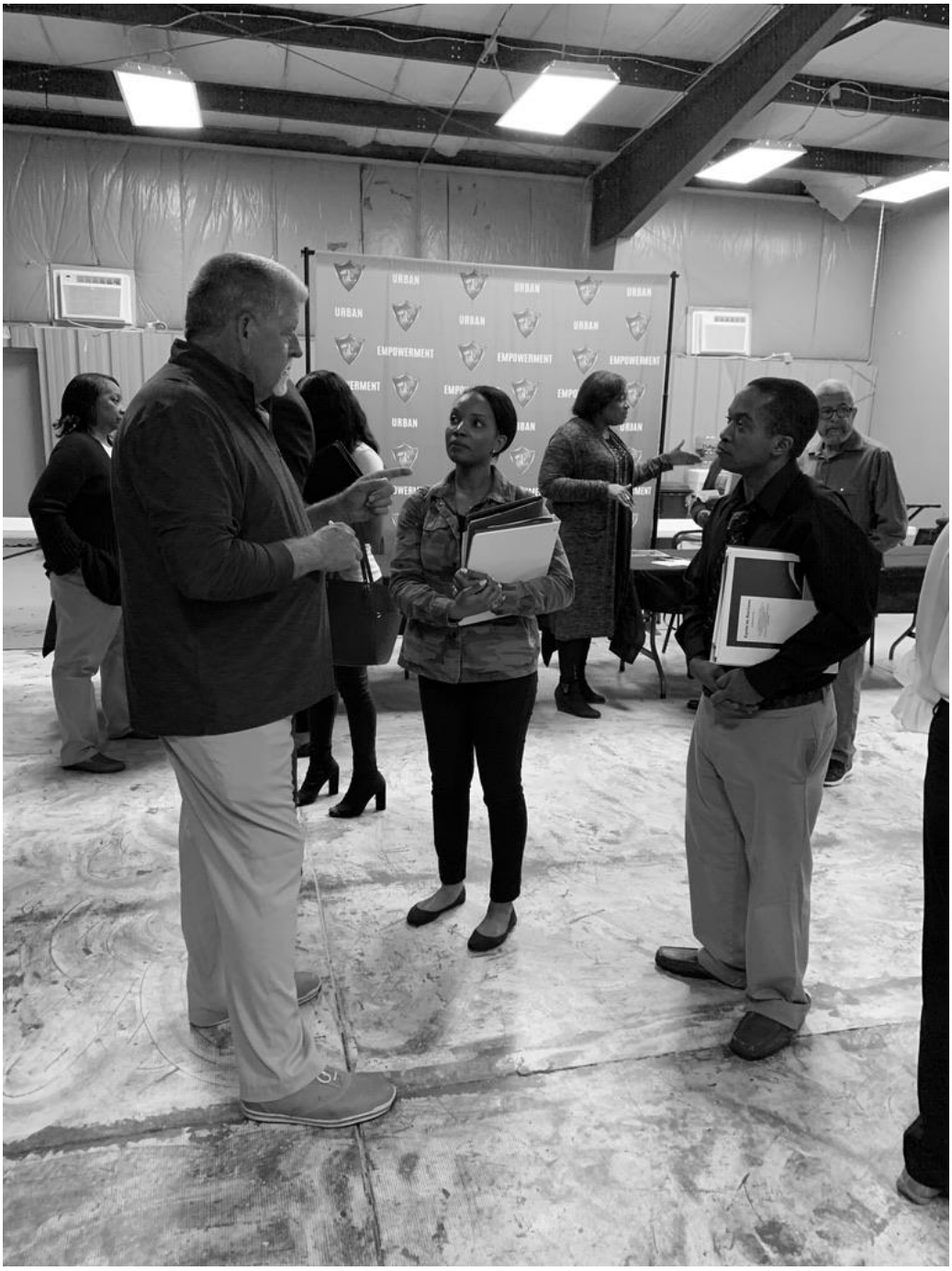
PHOTOS FROM EMPLOYER SESSIONS


URBAN EMPOWERMENT
MINISTRIES
GIVE BIG.
IGNITE BIG.


URBAN EMPOWERMENT






URBAN
EMPOWERMENT

APPENDIX Q

FALL CAREER EVENT

Make Tomorrow's Dream of a New Career Come True Today!

The Fall Career Event is designed to give job seekers the chance to be in front of top local employers and to learn more about the job market in our area.

In addition, valuable veteran resources will be available to any active or inactive service members seeking jobs in our market.



Save the Date

Fall Career Event

October 16th, 2019 10:00 am – 1:00 pm

Columbia Mall 2300 Bernadette Drive, Columbia, MO 65203

Brought to you by:

missouri jobcenter
A proud partner of the americanjobcenter network

jobs.T columbiatribune.com

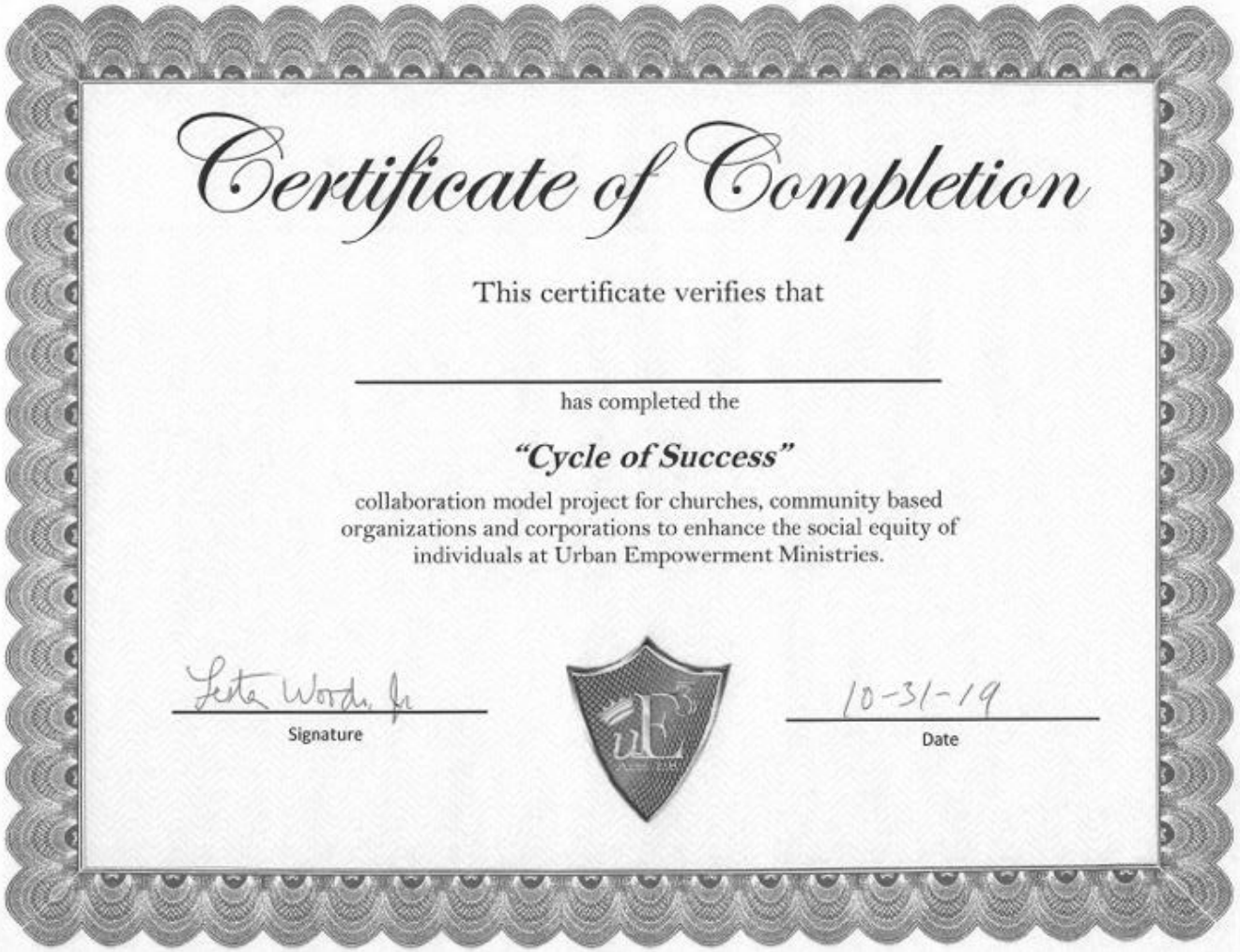
Tribune Classifieds

jobs.mo.gov
A proud partner of the americanjobcenter network

The Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Missouri Relay Services at 711.

APPENDIX R

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION



Certificate of Completion

This certificate verifies that

_____

has completed the

"Cycle of Success"

collaboration model project for churches, community based organizations and corporations to enhance the social equity of individuals at Urban Empowerment Ministries.

Festa Woods Jr
Signature

10-31-19
Date

APPENDIX S

COMPLETED FORMS

Cycle to Success

Please complete Inventory Identifiers:
Please Check: ___CBO or __Corporation
Name of CBO/CORP:

Community Based Organization (CBO) and Corporate Survey
Capacity Inventory Questionnaire

1. **Please provide your company's minimal expectation for employees.**
Application / Enrollment / JRI class - Job Readiness Training

2. **Please provide information about your organization's recruitment practices.**
Application' set goals depending on what Program of interest. Enrollment - meat with Training Class Job-Building self Esteem, Confidents, Mock interviews, etc.

3. **Please provide information on your company's retention practices.**
We work with all individual to unleash there skills to be self suffiient and placing them in the work force with ease. We work with them until there to there full potential.

4. **Please provide any other information that you can about your company/organization.**
Non-profit organization since 1965 accredited we work with individual.

1) Reentry
2) Disconnected Youth - drop outs, foster Children
3) Those who have disabilities
4) Those under Jacket to work

Cycle to Success

Community Based Organization (CBO) and Corporate Survey
Capacity Inventory Questionnaire

Please complete Inventory Identifiers:
Please Check: ___CBO or X Corporation
Name of CBO/CORP:
Heart of Missouri United Way

1. Please provide your company's minimal expectation for employees.

Expectations depend on the position but United Way expects a high-level of professionalism in an office setting. Expected Behavior is based on what a member of our community would expect. We strive to have a high level of customer service, collaboration with everyone on staff, a servants approach to the work and a belief in the values, mission and goals of the organization.

2. Please provide information about your organization's recruitment practices.

Recruitment is typically done through networking with members of the Community, our board of directors and other stakeholders. We also advertise on various websites (LinkedIn, Indeed, etc.)

3. Please provide information on your company's retention practices.

United Way strives to provide autonomy with the role of each employee while also understanding that everyone has specific duties with each position. We strive to foster individual professional growth, provide opportunities for continuing education through webinars and conferences (when funding is available). We strive to also have a positive atmosphere and an environment that celebrates hard work and recognizes accomplishments.

4. Please provide any other information that you can about your company/organization.

United Way also has used various "one-read" efforts where we all read the same book that aims to advance professional + individual growth. We use strengthfinders as a way to recognize the talents of each staff member and try to recognize that in having a better office environment + leverage those characteristics to provide a better staff experience.

Cycle to Success

Community Based Organization (CBO) and Corporate Survey
Capacity Inventory Questionnaire

Please complete Inventory Identifiers:
Please Check: ✓ CBO or __ Corporation
Name of CBO/CORP: Jane Williams - Love INC

1. Please provide your company's minimal expectation for employees.
support of our organizational mission
reliability; integrity
needed skills for the particular position

2. Please provide information about your organization's recruitment practices.
developing strong community partners
public awareness of our organization
through professional organizations & local churches

3. Please provide information on your company's ~~recruitment~~ retention practices.
positive performance evaluations
flexible schedules
staff support activities & retreats

4. Please provide any other information that you can about your company/organization.
Love INC coordinates resources & relationships
to love people forward to stability &
flourishing.

Cycle to Success

Community Based Organization (CBO) and Corporate Survey
Capacity Inventory Questionnaire

Please complete Inventory Identifiers:
Please Check: ✓CBO or __Corporation
Name of CBO/CORP: Damien Dean

1. **Please provide your company's minimal expectation for employees.**
   - Professionalism - Employees are Require to represent the company and themselves in a professional manner at all times.
   - Integrity - Honesty, trust, Accountability
   - Collaboration - work with fellow staff and community to accomplish the organizations mission.

2. **Please provide information about your organization's recruitment practices.**
   - word of ~~life~~ mouth
   - Social media
   - community networking

3. **Please provide information on your company's ~~recruitment~~ Retention practices.**
   - Encourage continued education and professional development
   - Financial bonus when available.
   - Prayer and more encouragement

4. **Please provide any other information that you can about your company/organization.**
   - www.vcbuilders.org
   - I am phone call away.

Cycle to Success

Community Based Organization (CBO) and Corporate Survey
Capacity Inventory Questionnaire

Please complete Inventory Identifiers:
Please Check: ___CBO or __Corporation
Name of CBO/CORP:
Columbia College

1. Please provide your company's minimal expectation for employees.
Many positions require an associate degree or higher.

2. Please provide information about your organization's recruitment practices.
We mainly recruite on our website and Indeed if we have a hard to fill position we will target a particular site to entice those positions we want to hire for - for instance - tech services we post on Dice.com

3. Please provide information on your company's retention practices.
Since starting we have had a lot of turnover so I tasked myself with implementing stay interviews to find out why people stay

4. Please provide any other information that you can about your company/organization.

Cycle to Success

ALLEN JENNINGS / KELLY SERVICES

Community Based Organization (CBO) and Corporate Survey
Capacity Inventory Questionnaire

Please complete Inventory Identifiers:
Please Check: ___CBO or ✓Corporation
Name of CBO/CORP: KELLY SERVICES

1. **Please provide your company's minimal expectation for employees.**

GOOD ATTENDANCE AT THE ASSIGNMENT WHERE THEY ARE PLACED. REPRESENT KELLY & THEMSELVES IN THE BEST LIGHT POSSIBLE.
WORK DILIGENTLY FOR SUCCESS W / SUPPLY

2. **Please provide information about your organization's recruitment practices.**

RECRUIT FOR MANY DIFFERENT POSITIONS.
LIGHT INDUSTRIAL, OFFICE / CLERICAL - CALL CENTER
PROFESSIONAL IT / ENGINEERING
DIVERSE & INCLUSIVE APPLICATION PROCESS

3. **Please provide information on your company's retention practices.**

WE HAVE ATTENDANCE BONUSES & OTHER PERKS TO KEEP PEOPLE ENGAGED
COUNSELING & MENTORING / MORALE

4. **Please provide any other information that you can about your company/organization.**

KELLYSERVICES.COM IS ALL INCLUSIVE

Cycle to Success

Community Based Organization (CBO) and Corporate Survey
Capacity Inventory Questionnaire

Please complete Inventory Identifiers:
Please Check: ___CBO or __Corporation
Name of CBO/CORP:
K. Thomas Homes and Remodeling

1. **Please provide your company's minimal expectation for employees.**

* Belive in our ~~division~~ vision and values
* Good comunication with Supervisor
* Have to like helping others

2. **Please provide information about your organization's recruitment practices.**

* We use Social Media for recruitment Videos
* we use Employment Website
* We have used recruitment Profecinals as well
* we try to get the word out by Participity in Community events

3. **Please provide information on your company's retention practices.**

* We do 90 day New hire reviews and use tet for on ramp and of ramp or Goal Setting
* we do Yearly reviews to set Goals
* we use 3 month Check ins on Goals

4. **Please provide any other information that you can about your company/organization.**

* family Company for 45+ years now

Cycle to Success

Randy Minchew

Community Based Organization (CBO) and Corporate Survey
Capacity Inventory Questionnaire

Please complete Inventory Identifiers:
Please Check: ___CBO or __Corporation
Name of CBO/CORP:

1. **Please provide your company's minimal expectation for employees.**

N/A

2. **Please provide information about your organization's recruitment practices.**

N/A

3. **Please provide information on your company's recruitment practices.**

N/A

4. **Please provide any other information that you can about your company/organization.**

WE HAVE 9 COMPANIES IN 13 STATES

Cycle to Success

Community Based Organization (CBO) and Corporate Survey
Capacity Inventory Questionnaire

Please complete Inventory Identifiers:
Please Check: ___CBO or ✓Corporation
Name of CBO/CORP:
Veterans United Home Loans

1. Please provide your company's minimal expectation for employees.

2. Please provide information about your organization's recruitment practices.

3. Please provide information on your company's recruitment practices.
Mostly word of mouth, involvement in community projects.
LinkedIn. Employee referals.

4. Please provide any other information that you can about your company/organization.
We are a culture & people focused company

Cycle to Success

Please complete Inventory Identifiers:
Please Check: ___CBO or __Corporation
Name of CBO/CORP: Shelter Insurance

Community Based Organization (CBO) and Corporate Survey
Capacity Inventory Questionnaire

1. **Please provide your company's minimal expectation for employees.**
   - High school for some jobs, college or relative experience for others.
   - Ability to learn
   - Customer Focused.
   - Team player
2. **Please provide information about your organization's recruitment practices.**
   We post all positions on our external website. additionally we utilize job posting boards- CareerBuilder, Indeed and Diversityjobs. on difficult to fill positions we use recruiting firms. Career Fairs and community events are also a recruitment source.
3. **Please provide information on your company's recruitment practices.**
   Same as above. additionally we are relying more and more on community engagement and social media sources. (Facebook, LinkedIn) Employee referrals are also critical
4. **Please provide any other information that you can about your company/organization.**
   Core values
   1) Sale Insurance
   2) Customer Service - Top Notch
      CJD Powers award - 3 of 4 yrs
   3) Good corporate community citizen
   4) Do the right thing

4000 employees and 1 agents in 21 states

APPENDIX T

PARTICIPANTS RESPONSE

From: xxxxxxxxxxx
Subject: Re: Collaboration Model: Participant Workshop and Life/Social Skill Questionnaire
Date: December 8, 2019 at 9:26:41 PM CST
To: "Bishop Lester Woods, Jr." <lesterwoodsjr@gmail.com>

Good evening Bishop, yes, I can resend it for you. From November 4. And yes, I'm doing alright. Taking it easy tonight.

Hi Bishop. I completed the survey, Thursday evening, but I still wanted to share my experience with you. I didn't speak because at the time, I didn't know what to say. I pray it's not too long/too late.

At the time when the research began, I was at a low and breaking point. I shared some of my frustration with you about - feeling stagnant at work, among the people and the community I want to serve; that I'm designed to serve/have a voice for. I'm a Medical Case Manager, but at my job that will be all that I ever am. Our supervisor is looking to retire soon, but they have a person in mind already to move up to that postion. But I don't want to do case management forever. I make a great impact to my clients, but it's not all I want to do.

I had applied to several positions throughout the Department of Health and Senior Services, City of Columbia, University of Missouri, and even a few other nonprofits. I was getting interviews, some second interviews. But still at my current job, unhappy. I tried to push through, because I know the Lord asks of us to be content in our current season until He moves us otherwise. It's hard to be content when things around you are hectic, depressing, and for many things out of our control. Staying afloat in balancing bills, family disagreements, aging parents, and wanting the Lord to shine through in a magnificent way, desiring for the Lord to help me through it all with the remaining string of hope i felt i had left, is not an easy task.

By the end of the summer and several applications and interviews later, i was just burned out and completely disappointed and discouraged. I wanted better; i deserved better. I knew i did, as I had been pushing for this since almost summertime last year. As I mentioned by this summer rolled around and I was still there, i felt completely broken. And said forget it, I need a break.

I signed up for the research because, "What did have to lose" I'm already as low emotionally and mentally i felt i could go. As you discussed the goal of the study and the potential in outcomes, i felt a small twinge of hope filling me back up. Because if the Lord can do it for you, He can definitely do the same for me. The research was the break I needed. Improving the skills I have already and enhancing those that are already strong, helped greatly. The resources and connections made with other Community Based Organizations benefited not only me, but several clients I work with that felt they were in similiar low points in life. So i knew I wasn't just there to help you with your research, or

just to look out for myself to become gainfully employed, it was clearly helping those I serve to begin finding jobs themselves.

Our sessions were coming to an end, and I was starting to have the desire to begin applying again. And even if i didn't get the outcome I wanted with one position, I couldn't give up, because one day there will be a position I apply to that i will not only get an interview, but i will get hired, and have income that reflects my skills, my worth, and also the Favor of God that He would want for me to have as well.

I applied to a State position at the beginning of October, as our sessions were ending. After the closing date, after about a week and half, I did receive a call for an interview. That is set for tomorrow 1pm. In the last year as well I had also applied to several part time jobs. One that I applied to this summer, I received a phone call last week for an interview with them. That too is tomorrow, 5pm. I know the Lord is working, even when it doesn't feel like He is. I can't base my reality on the Power I know Jesus has to do exceedingly, abundantly, above all that I can ask or think, as said in Ephesians 3:20. I know ALL things work together for the good of those that love the Lord and are called according to His purpose, as in Romans 8:28. And additionally, from you Bishop, I have been praying the Prayer of Jabez daily since the start of your research, that the Lord would enlarge my territory, as He did then in 1 Chronicles 4:10.

So I just want to say thank you also Bishop, for the design of your research and the desire from God to show the love of Christ to not only to your congregation, but to the community. The Lord has used you to be a vessel to help get others the resources and blessings that you yourself have utilized and been connected to. You are a blessing to the community and to the Kingdom and have in turned helped bless others.

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